DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 386 555 CE 069 777

AUTHOR	Kister, Joanna; And Others
TITLE	Family Relations Resource Guide. A Resource for Teaching the Family Relations Core Course Area of Ohio's Work and Family Life Program.
INSTITUTION	Ohio State Univ., Columbus. Vocational Instructional Materials Lab.
SPONS AGENCY	Ohio State Dept. of Education, Columbus. Div. of Vocational and Adult Education.
PUB DATE	95
NOTE	294p.; For related guides, see ED 362 715-716, ED 375 287-288, and CE 069 778.
AVAILABLE FROM	Vocational Instructional Materials Lab, Center on Education and Training for Employment, 1900 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1090 (order no. WFL-05: $25).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC12 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Behavioral Objectives; Family Life; *Family Life Education; *Family Relationship; Family Role; *Family Work Relationship; *Home Management; Instructional Materials; Interpersonal Communication; Interpersonal Competence; Leadership Responsibility; Learning Activities; Learning Modules; *Problem Solving; Secondary Education; State Curriculum Guides; Student Evaluation

ABSTRACT

This resource guide provides those teaching the Family Relations course of the Ohio Work and Family Life Program an overview of the course content, teacher background information, learning activities, and assessment ideas. It has one teaching module for each process competency and each content competency in the Family Relations and Process Competency units of the Occupational Competency Analysis Profile (OCAP). These modules appear in this guide in the same order in which the competencies are listed in the OCAP. The learning activities are written from the students' perspective, but teacher notes are included to assist teachers in conducting activities. The four process modules are as follows: managing work and family responsibilities, solving personal and family problems, relating to others, and assuming a leadership role. The eight content modules cover the following subjects: analyzing the significance of families; nurturing human development; forming one's own family; building and maintaining healthy family relationships; developing family communication patterns; dealing with stress, conflicts, and crises; managing work and family roles and responsibilities; and analyzing social forces affecting families. Each module consists of these components: module overview, including practical problem, process competency, competency builders, and supporting concepts; teacher background information with rationale, background, and list of references; learning activities; assessment (paper and pencil, classroom experiences, and application to real-life settings); and handouts. (YLB)

ED 386 555

FAMILY RELATIONS RESOURCE GUIDE

Work and Family Life Program

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

C Hansen

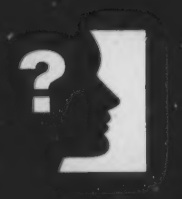
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

VOCATIONAL

HOME ECONOMICS

CE 065 777



Family Relations Resource Guide

A Resource for Teaching the Family Relations Core Course Area of Ohio's Work and Family Life Program

Joanna Kister, Assistant Director
Ohio Department of Education
Division of Vocational and Adult Education

Sandra Laurenson, Supervisor
Ohio Department of Education
Division of Vocational and Adult Education

Heather Boggs
Vocational Education Consultant
The Ohio State University

1995

Additional copies of this resource guide are available from
The Ohio State University
Vocational Instructional Materials Laboratory
1900 Kenny Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1016
(614) 292-4277

This publication was supported by federal funds of Public Law 101-392, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education and Applied Technology Act Amendments of 1990, distributed by the Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Adult Education.

It is the policy of The Ohio State University to offer educational activities, employment practices, programs, and services without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, handicap, or age.

CONTENTS

Preface v

Introduction 1

Process Modules

1. Managing Work and Family Responsibilities 5
2. Solving Personal and Family Problems 15
3. Relating to Others 39
4. Assuming a Leadership Role 57

Content Modules

1. Analyzing the Significance of Families 77
2. Nurturing Human Development 101
3. Forming One's Own Family 125
4. Building and Maintaining Healthy Family Relationships 159
5. Developing Family Communication Patterns 183
6. Dealing with Stress, Conflicts, and Crises 221
7. Managing Work and Family Roles and Responsibilities 247
8. Analyzing Social Forces Affecting Families 267

PREFACE

The mission of Ohio Family and Consumer Sciences programs is to prepare youth and adults for the work of the family. The ultimate aim of Family and Consumer Sciences is to strengthen families, empowering individuals to take action for the well-being of self and others in the home, workplace, community, and world. Our society depends on strong families. Strong families nurture individuals, serve as their first teachers, instill values and standards of behavior, and provide human resources for the work force. Unfortunately, statistics with regard to divorce, teen pregnancy, poverty, and family violence suggest that this important institution is in danger. Ohio Family and Consumer Sciences programs can provide much needed support for individuals by empowering them to take responsibility for the well-being of their families.

The Ohio Work and Family Life Program is based upon what students need to know, to be able to do, and to be like in order to be competent in the work of the family. The curriculum engages students in practical problem solving—including practical reasoning— to clarify personal and family issues, evaluate alternative choices and their consequences, develop criteria and standards for making ethical choices, and take action based on the consequences for self, family, and others. The four process skills listed below, which are essential to competence in the work of the family, are taught in each Work and Family Life course:

Managing Work and Family Responsibilities
Solving Personal and Family Problems
Relating to Others
Assuming a Leadership Role as a Responsible Citizen

There are six core course areas of the Work and Family Life Program that reflect the practical, perennial problems faced by families. The six resource guides listed below provide assistance to teachers in implementing each core course area of the program.

Personal Development (1993 release)
Resource Management (1993 release)
Life Planning (1994 release)
Nutrition and Wellness (1994 release)
Family Relations (1995 release)
Parenting (1995 release)

Ohio's Competency Analysis Profile (OCAP) was developed to identify competencies required for each of the process skills and for each of the six course areas. These competencies were designed to enable learners to reason through practical problems and take action that is best for self and others. This competency list is available from The Ohio State University, Vocational Instructional Materials Laboratory, 1900 Kenny Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210-1016 (614/292-4277).

The *Family Relations Resource Guide* reflects the expertise of many individuals, including teachers, curriculum specialists, and Ohio Department of Education staff. In June 1994, a team of teachers and content specialists met to begin developing the modules appearing in this guide. Their commitment to this curriculum project is to be commended. The team members were

Debra Damron, Liberty-Benton High School
Anita Eldridge, Morgan High School
Krista Hagelberger, Fort Loramie High School
Karen Hardman, Central Hower High School
Pat Inman, Jefferson Area High School
Linda Madaffer, Riverdale High School
Bonnie Short, Hilliard High School
Leann Thacker, Carlisle High School
Emma Yanok, Westerville North High School
Teresa Yontz, Springfield South High School
Sue Coady, The Ohio State University
Joyce Fittro, Delaware County Ohio State University Extension
Christine Kate, Miami University
Kathy McWilliams, Family Life Education, Cleveland Public Schools

Special recognition is extended to the professionals listed below, who gave willingly of their time, knowledge, and skills in developing the resource guide.

Dr. Barbara M. Newman, Professor of Family Relations and Human Development and Dr. Philip R. Newman, Adjunct Processor of Home Economics Education and Senior Researcher, both of The Ohio State University, wrote the teacher background information for the content modules.

Dr. Janet Laster, Associate Professor, The Ohio State University, Department of Home Economics Education, wrote teacher background information for the process modules and critically reviewed many learning activities.

Dr. Gail Henderson, Director of Vocational, Career, and Adult Education, Arlington Public Schools, Arlington, Virginia, reviewed module drafts.

Emily Gibbs, Instructor, Delaware Joint Vocational School, wrote the teacher background information for Process Module 1: Managing Work and Family Responsibilities.

The following teachers in a program planning course at The Ohio State University contributed to the development of the process modules.

Kay Miller, Big Walnut High School
Diane Knipp, Wapakoneta High School
Yvonne Kemock, Lincoln-West High School
Jane Eiden, Northland High School
Karen Eales, National Trail High School
Fran Obarski, Medina Senior High School
Sue McInturf, Williamsburg High School
Karen Higgins, Loveland High School

Kathy Kush, Center on Education and Training for Employment, The Ohio State University, provided technical assistance in formatting the resource guide.

In addition, many Family and Consumer Sciences teachers throughout Ohio reviewed and provided suggestions for the development of modules for this resource guide. Their time and energy, which contributed greatly to the curriculum project, are much appreciated.

INTRODUCTION

The Ohio Work and Family Life Program, a secondary Family and Consumer Sciences program, is based upon what students need to know, be able to do, and be like in order to be competent in the demanding, challenging, and changing work of the family. The curriculum for the program includes the development of the process skills of managing work and family life, solving personal and family problems, relating to others, and assuming a leadership role as a responsible citizen. The course content is focused on six areas that reflect the practical, perennial problems faced as part of the work of the family. These six areas are

- Personal Development
- Resource Management
- Life Planning
- Nutrition and Wellness
- Family Relations
- Parenting

The *Family Relations Resource Guide* provides those teaching the Family Relations course an overview of the course content, teacher background information, learning activities, and assessment ideas. This guide has one teaching module for each process competency and each content competency in the Family Relations and Process Competency units of the OCAP. These modules appear in this guide in the same order in which the competencies are listed in the OCAP. The learning activities are written from the students' perspective, but teacher notes are included to assist teachers in conducting activities.

An integral part of the curriculum is reasoning through problems by identifying personal and family values, obtaining adequate information for problem solving, and critically evaluating alternative solutions and their consequences for self and others. Once a student has reasoned through and decided on a course of action, the emphasis is on developing the skills necessary to take that action, leading to the significant outcome of responsible behavior in interpersonal, family, school, community, and work settings.

The Family Relations core course area focuses on the practical, perennial problem, "What should I do to build strong families?" Table 1 illustrates how each module in the resource guide focuses on a specific practical problem related to strengthening families. The practical problems are posed through case studies and shared experiences, and examined using critical questions that will lead to ethical decisions and reasoned action.

Because of the nature of the content of this course, it is imperative to actively seek input and involvement of parents and community members regarding curriculum decisions. An active Work and Family Life Program Advisory Committee can be an excellent resource in this capacity. Parents are the first and primary teachers for their children. Therefore, instruction should supplement and support what is learned in the students' homes and families. Specific topics for discussion and learning activities should be selected with an awareness of value systems represented in the community, as well as the cultural and socioeconomic diversity of the student population.

Table 1

Practical Problems Posed in the Family Relations Core Course Area

Content Module	Practical Problem Focus	Practical Problem-Solving Questions Addressed Through Learning Experiences
1	What should I do about the significance of families?	What is the significance of strong families for individuals and for society? What should be the role of families in today's society? How should the significance of families guide my actions as a family member?
2	What should I do about nurturing human development?	Why is it important to nurture family members? What criteria should I use to determine how best to nurture family members? What strategies should I use to nurture the development of family members throughout the life cycle?
3	What should I do about forming my own family?	What factors influence readiness for marriage? For parenting? What criteria should I use to determine readiness for marriage? For parenting?
4	What should I do about building healthy family relationships?	What are the characteristics of healthy families? What strategies can I use to build a strong family? What skills do I need to build a strong family?
5	What should I do about family communication?	Why is good communication important in families? What factors influence family communication patterns? What strategies should I use to communicate with family members?
6	What should I do about family stress, conflicts, and crises?	What are the consequences of family stress, conflicts, and crises? What strategies should I use to deal with family stress, conflicts, and crises? What actions can I take to prevent or minimize stress, conflicts, and crises?
7	What should I do about managing work and family roles and responsibilities?	What is the significance of the interconnectedness of work and family life? What factors impact the relationship between work and family life? What strategies should I use to balance work and family responsibilities?
8	What should I do about social forces affecting families?	What are the consequences of various social forces affecting families? What actions should I take to promote the well-being of families in society?

It is also important to consider the family experiences of students in the course and to modify learning activities where necessary. Though appropriate personal reflection is important to meaningful learning, students should not be asked to disclose personal information they are unwilling to share with others. If many of the students in the course come from troubled families, they will need examples of positive interaction to grasp the concept of strong families. Simulated classroom experiences and examples from literature and media sources will contribute to meaningful learning about caring, respectful relationships important to families.

The four process modules in the *Family Relations Resource Guide* are intended to be taught together as an introduction to the Family Relations course. It is recommended that

Process Module 1, Managing Work and Family Responsibilities be taught first in the sequence of modules. The remaining three process modules should soon follow as the learning activities in these modules begin the development of several important concepts and skills, and introduce ongoing learning activities that students will continue throughout the course. Table 2 outlines the specific goals of each process module.

Students may have a variety of experience with these process skills, depending on the Work and Family Life courses taken previously to Family Relations. Since the process skills involve complex higher order thinking skills, they develop gradually over time. Students may be in varying stages of skill development. Teachers may assess students' level of understanding and modify the learning activities to meet students' needs. The learning activities in the modules are designed specifically for students to examine the process skills as they relate to the study of family relations.

To develop the knowledge and skills important to strengthening families, three ongoing learning experiences have been included in the resource guide learning activities. These experiences are centered around the various practical problems related to strengthening families and provide an opportunity to enhance the practical application of family relations knowledge and skills. These three learning experiences are outlined on the next page.

Table 2
Family Relations Resource Guide
Overview of Process Modules

Module	Knowledge and Skills	Classroom Environment
Managing Work and Family Responsibilities	The work of the family Importance of studying families	Introduce the four process skills: managing work and family responsibilities, solving personal and family problems, relating to others, and assuming a leadership role. Provide an overview of the Family Relations Course.
Solving Personal and Family Problems	Personal and family problems Practical problem-solving process	Begin Reflection Notebook assignment.
Relating to Others	Caring, respectful relationships Constructive expression of feeling, needs, and ideas Conflict management	Relate classroom behavior guidelines (classroom rules) to caring and respectful relationships. Establish Family Relations Research Teams.
Assuming a Leadership Role	Cooperation Leadership Citizenship Planning process	Establish FHA/HERO cocurricular chapter. Introduce Action Projects.

1. **Family Relations Research Teams**. An important goal of the Family Relations class is to help students develop skill in working cooperatively within groups. Skills such as communicating, resolving conflict, setting and working toward group goals, and fostering group cooperation can be learned and practiced in cooperative learning groups during the course. These skills, once developed, can help students develop strong families and strong communities. An FHA/HERO chapter, established as part of the class, can provide an excellent opportunity for small group interaction. In addition, the learning activities incorporate the use of Family Relations Research Teams as base groups for cooperative learning assignments throughout the semester. Cooperative learning strategies have been incorporated into the learning experiences throughout the guide. Student groups should be selected to reflect the diversity of the student population.

2. **Reflection Notebook**. This assignment provides an opportunity to reflect on family relations topics and issues studied in class, as well as to read and react to magazine, newspaper, and journal articles about family relations topics.

3. **Action Projects**. These projects provide opportunities to apply what is learned in Family Relations class to real-life settings. Action Projects should be chosen based on student interest and needs. Each project should focus on a practical problem related to strengthening families. Parents, classmates, teachers, and community members may be involved in the planning and implementation of the project, depending on the project focus.

Instructional time spent on each module will vary during an 18-week course according to the students' educational needs. Though the learning activities were designed for a semester course, there are more than enough activities for this time period. Activities should be selected or modified to meet student and community needs. Part of the 18-week period can be spent further developing the competencies identified, or addressing other topics as identified by the local program advisory committee.

The materials in these guides, as those in the guides previously published for the Work and Family Life program were designed specifically for classroom use by teachers. Permission has been granted by both internal and external sources to copy materials for students.

For additional information regarding the philosophy and implementation of the Work and Family Life Program and the format, use, and implementation of each of the six resource guides, please refer to the *Work and Family Life Program Implementation Guide*, available from the Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Adult Education, Family and Consumer Sciences, 65 S. Front Street, Room 909, Columbus, Ohio 43215-4183 (614-466-3046).

Family Relations

Managing Work and Family Responsibilities

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about managing work and family responsibilities?

Process Competency 0.0.1: Manage work and family responsibilities for the well-being of self and others

Competency Builders:

0.0.1.1 Explore the meaning of work and the meaning of family*
0.0.1.2 Compare how work life is affected by families and how families are affected by work life**
0.0.1.3 Identify management strategies for balancing work and family roles**

* This competency builder is further developed in Content Module 1: Analyzing the Significance of Families.

**These competency builders are covered in Content Module 7: Managing Work and Family Roles and Responsibilities.

Supporting Concepts:

1. The meaning of family
2. The meaning of work

Teacher Note: Since the four process competencies of managing work and family responsibilities, solving personal and family problems, relating to others, and assuming a leadership role represent skills essential to strong families, the four process modules introducing these skills should be taught at the beginning of the Family Relations course. Refer to **Overview of the Family Relations Resource Guide Process Modules** (p. 3) to determine which process modules establish projects and activities that will continue throughout the course, such as Action Projects, FHA/HERO activities, and cooperative learning groups. It is recommended that this module be taught first in the sequence of the four process modules. The remaining three can be sequenced as appropriate to specific classroom settings.

Since the content of the process competencies remains relatively unchanged over the six core course areas of the Work and Family Life program, the teacher background information is the same as that printed in previous guides. The learning activities, however, have been designed specifically for this course area and complement the content modules found in the rest of the guide.

Managing Work and Family Responsibilities

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

Society depends on two constants for its survival: family systems and work (Felstehausen & Schultz, 1991). Though these two systems have always been interconnected in numerous ways, the nature of each system and the way in which they harmonize and conflict have changed greatly in the last few decades. Increasing numbers of single-parent and dual-income families, changes in work and family roles, differences between employer and family expectations, and changes in lifestyles have created new perspectives on the relationship between work and family life. The problem of competing work and family demands is an issue not only for family members but for the economy as well. Society cannot be optimally productive unless the needs of employer and employees are accommodated.

A resolution passed by the American Vocational Association in 1992 recognized the family as the first teacher and the first setting in which children learn about work: "The labor force is produced and affected by families and there is a relationship between family functioning and work productivity." The resolution urges that there be recognition of the value of a strong family unit and the contribution it makes to the work force and economy. It further states that the curriculum of all vocational education programs should include appreciation for the interrelationship of family and work.

With an understanding of work and family roles, students will be better prepared to make informed choices regarding their future career and family development. Before making career decisions, students should think about the impact of their career,choice on their future family. Increased knowledge of the interconnectedness of work and family will enable students to increase their productivity, thereby strengthening the nation's economy and encouraging business, industry, and government policies to enhance the well-being of families. An appreciation of the important balance between work and family systems can enrich family life and contribute to success in the world of work, and most importantly, allow individuals to lead happier, more satisfying lives.

Background

Though the word *work* is often associated with paid employment outside the home, it is used in contexts that imply a wide variety of meanings. These meanings can be classified into two groups:

1. *Work* may refer to a product, such as a good, service, thing, or idea that results from human effort and has economic, social, and/or personal value to individuals, families, or society.

2. *Work* may also be a process, or the human action or activity itself. This kind of work refers to deliberate action directed toward accomplishing a particular goal.

In either context, work can be a source of personal satisfaction—a place to go to interact with other people, a way to enhance personal development, or a means of earning money to buy things. In fact, the activities

that happen in a family may be considered "work." The work of the family can include nurturing other family members, creating or obtaining resources for use by family members, or creating and maintaining a living space for the family.

Students are workers, whether they are employed or not. School and extracurricular activities involve many of the same responsibilities, time commitments, and conflicts with personal and family life as paid employment. Adolescents are also engaged in the work of the family, with increasing responsibility for family resources and the care of other family members as they make strides toward their own independence.

Each day, more American families join the ranks of the dual-worker or single-parent family. This trend, as evidenced by the statistics below, contributes to the complexity of balancing work and family responsibilities.

- Less than ten percent of American families fit the traditional model represented by two parents, a wage-earning husband, and a homemaker wife.*
- Among two-parent families, nearly 80 percent are classified as dual-earner.*
- Since 1960, the number of mothers with children under the age of five working outside the home has increased from 15 percent to over 60 percent.
- In 1990, 57.5 percent of women over age 16 participated in the labor force.
- Between 80 and 85 percent of all the children in America will be growing up in the homes of working mothers.

Work does not exist in a vacuum, nor do individuals and families (Jorgensen & Henderson, 1990). Families do affect the workplace. According to a 1985 Boston University study, nearly one half of the employees interviewed associated depression at work with the strain of holding a job and raising a family at the same time. Workers who experience basically stable home environments with minimum frustrations are generally more dependable, productive workers. Basic skills and abilities learned at home are carried over into the work world. The workplace, in turn, affects families. Direct results of employment, such as income, economic benefits, and job satisfaction, clearly affect family life.

Balancing life to include an equitable distribution of time and energy for career, relationships, and self is often a difficult task. Women who work outside the home still assume the major responsibility for the home and family (Couch, 1989). Men are struggling to grow more comfortable with shared family life. Just as women should not be denied the opportunity for a self-fulfilling, challenging career, men should not be deprived of fatherhood and a life apart from their careers.

The most common stressors involved in balancing work and family responsibilities are overload and interference (Voyandoff & Kelly, 1984). Overload is experienced when the number of responsibilities for one or more roles is greater than the individual can handle adequately or comfortably. Interference exists

*These statistics have been updated from previous resource guides.

when responsibilities conflict and individuals are required to do two things at the same time. Family-related demands such as large family size, conflicts within the family, low spousal support, managing household tasks, finding quality day care, and managing time, stress, and energy are all related to conflict situations in balancing work and family life (Felstehausen, Glosson, & Couch, 1986; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Family changes such as divorce, death, new relationships, and increased expenses are also associated with work and family conflicts (Voyandoff & Kelly, 1984).

The way in which families balance work and family life varies from one family to the next. The balance depends on the family's values and goals. To help achieve a healthy balance between work and family life, families need to learn to develop strategies for time management, high-quality family communication, stress management, delegation and prioritization of family work, and support systems (Jorgensen & Henderson, 1990). Flexible occupations and work hours, careful timing of family role demands, mutual support, understanding, consideration, and cooperation are also strategies for helping to alleviate conflicts between work and family life (Gupta & Jenkins, 1985).

Developing a balance between work and family is an important life task. Essential are strategies for managing time, energy, and money. The degree of success in creating this balance contributes to the happiness and well-being of today's family and leads to increased productivity and job satisfaction in the workplace.

References

Couch, A. S. (1989). Career and family: The modern worker's balancing act. *Vocational Education Journal, 64* (6), 24-27.

Felstehausen, G., Glosson, L. R., & Couch, A. S. (1986). *A study to determine the relationship between the workplace and the home.* Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech University.

Felstehausen, G., & Schultz, J. B. (1991). (Eds.) *Work and family: Educational implications.* Peoria, IL: Glencoe.

Greenhaus, J. H., & Beutell, N. J. (1985). *Sources of conflict between work and family roles.* Academy of Management Review, *10* (1), 76-88.

Gupta, N., & Jenkins, G. D., Jr. (1985). Dual-career couples: Stress, stressors, strains, and strategies. In T. A. Beehr & R. S. Bhagat (Eds.), *Human stress and cognition in organization: An integrated perspective.* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Jorgensen, S. R., & Henderson, G. H. (1990). *Dimensions of family life.* Cincinnati, OH: Southwestern Publishing.

U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (1992). *Work and family: Part-time employment transitions among young women.* Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Labor.

Learning Activities

1. The meaning of family

a. Design a bulletin board entitled, "The Building Blocks of Family Life: Strong Families Need a Strong Foundation," that displays the shape of a building surrounded by pictures of families (include families from a variety of cultures that represent various family forms). List words or phrases that describe a strong family. Share your list with the class and compile a list of these words or phrases on the chalkboard. Read **The Building Blocks of Family Life** (p. 13). Write each of the four skills on a building block. Describe how the list of words and phrases listed on the chalkboard relates to each of the four skills. As each skill is discussed, place the building block on the foundation of the building pictured on the bulletin board.

Discussion Questions

- *Why are families important to you? To your community? To society?*
- *Why is each of the skills identified in the above activity important to families?*
- *What are the advantages of learning these skills?*
- *In what ways do you already possess some skills in these areas? In what ways could you improve your present skills to prepare to build a strong family?*

Teacher Note: This series of activities is designed to introduce the four process skills in relation to the work of the family. The meaning of the term *family* will be further developed in Content Module 1: Analyzing the Significance of Families.

b. Select a colored block from a box. Find other class members who have a similarly colored block and form small groups. Make a list of issues facing families today. Write the issues on pieces of red construction paper cut to look like bricks. Take turns having each group add a brick to the bulletin board designed for the previous activity. Once all the family issues are added to the building over the foundation of process skills, discuss the consequences of families facing these issues with and without a strong foundation of the four process skills: managing work and family responsibilities, solving personal and family problems, relating to others, and assuming a leadership role.

c. Examine the syllabus or course outline for your Family Relations class and relate the units of study to the process skills and issues faced by families identified in the previous activities.

Discussion Questions

- *Why is it important to learn more about families?*
- *What issues on the syllabus are most important to you? Why?*
- *What are your expectations for this course?*

d. Watch television programs about families and find at least two examples of behavior that illustrate each of the four process skills. In pairs, share your findings.

e. **Action Project:** Keep a record of your family's activities for one week. At the end of the week classify the activities according to the four process skills. Reflect on the importance of these skills to your family, using questions such as those listed below.

(1) What is the most important thing your family does for you?
(2) What is the most important thing you do for your family?
(3) Which process skills are most evident in the work of your family? Least evident?
(4) What are the consequences of these skills for you? Your family? Your community?

2. The meaning of work

a. Identify phrases that include the word *work,* such as those listed below, and write them on the chalkboard or an overhead transparency. In small groups, research definitions for the word in a dictionary, encyclopedia, thesaurus, textbook, or other classroom resources. Post the definitions in the classroom and note similarities and differences.

(1) Good work!
(2) It was her life's work.
(3) That was hard work.
(4) Where do you work?
(5) Get to work!
(6) I'm working on it.

b. In small groups, choose one of the following categories and list examples of work tasks that take place in that setting. Share your lists and explain how they illustrate the definitions of work researched in the previous activity. Circle work tasks that you have done. Share your feelings about doing different types of work in different settings.

(1) Workplace
(2) Family
(3) Community
(4) School

Discussion Questions
- *Why is work important in our lives?*
- *How does work contribute to your self-formation?*
- *What are the consequences of doing work in these settings?*
- *Who is responsible for doing these work tasks?*

c. Write the phrase, "The Work of the Family." on the chalkboard. Review the four process skills and explain how these skills might be used in the work of the family.

d. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook about the meaning of work in your life. Use the questions below to guide your reflection.

(1) What type of work do you do now? What type will you do in the future?
(2) What is the most meaningful work that you do? Why?
(3) Is it possible to be engaged in work that is not meaningful? Why or why not?
(4) How can you choose work that will improve your life and the lives of others?

Teacher Note: The reflection notebook assignment is explained in Activity 3c of Process Module 2, Solving Personal and Family Problems.

e. **Action Project:** Interview families at different life cycle stages, asking them to describe the work of the family. Classify the responses according to the four process skills. Note similarities and differences between the work of families at various stages. Present your findings to the class.

Managing Work and Family Responsibilities

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Without the aid of references, write a paragraph that describes why the skills of managing work and family responsibilities, solving personal and family problems, relating to others, and assuming a leadership role are important to families.

Classroom Experiences

1. Watch television programs about families and find at least two examples of behavior that illustrate each of the four process skills. In pairs, share your findings.

2. Write a journal entry about the meaning of work in your life.

Application to Real-Life Settings

1. Keep a record of your family's activities for one week. At the end of the week, classify the activities according to the four process skills. Reflect on the importance of these skills to your family.

2. Interview families at different life cycle stages, asking them to describe the work of the family. Classify the responses according to the four process skills. Note similarities and differences between the work of families at various stages. Present your findings to the class.

The Building Blocks of Family Life

Managing Work and Family Responsibilities

Description: Management means planning and organizing resources to take action. Managing the responsibilities of both family life and work life can increase satisfaction with family life and productivity at work.
Examples: Planning and using a family budget; making a schedule of family activities; setting a goal and making a plan to spend time together as a family; and purchasing and preparing healthy food.

Solving Personal and Family Problems

Description: Everyone faces problems. The quality of life depends on the decisions individuals and families make throughout life. Skill in collaboratively solving problems contributes to the strength of families.
Examples: Recognizing and facing problems with a positive attitude; seeking adequate and reliable information when solving problems; evaluating choices based on goals and values important to the family; and reflecting on decisions and evaluating actions.

Relating to Others

Description: The quality of family life depends on the interaction between family members. Caring, respectful relationships in families help family members develop to their fullest potential.
Examples: Expressing feelings, needs, and ideas constructively; listening actively; recognizing and respecting individual differences; and resolving conflict.

Assuming Leadership Roles

Description: Leadership involves helping family members work together to reach a common goal.
Examples: Establishing family visions and goals; cooperating; and planning actions that achieve family goals.

Solving Personal and Family Problems

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about solving personal and family problems?

Process Competency 0.0.2: Apply problem-solving process to personal and family problems for well-being of self and others

Competency Builders:

- 0.0.2.1 Clarify personal and family issues
- 0.0.2.2 Identify adequate, reliable information and resources for personal and family problem solving
- 0.0.2.3 Create alternative choices for solving problems
- 0.0.2.4 Evaluate potential consequences of alternative choices
- 0.0.2.5 Use criteria and standards to make ethical decisions
- 0.0.2.6 Evaluate outcomes

Supporting Concepts:

1. Personal and family issues
2. Practical problem solving
3. Evaluation of outcomes

Teacher Note: Since the four process competencies of managing work and family responsibilities, solving personal and family problems, relating to others, and assuming a leadership role represent skills essential to strong families, the four process modules introducing these skills should be taught at the beginning of the Family Relations course. This module introduces the concept of problem solving and establishes the Reflection Notebook Project which will be used throughout the course. Refer to **Overview of the Family Relations Resource Guide Process Modules** (p. 3) to determine the focus of each process module.

Since the content of the process competencies remains relatively unchanged over the six core course areas of the Work and Family Life program, the teacher background information is the same as that printed in previous guides. The learning activities, however, have been designed specifically for this course area and complement the content modules found in the rest of the guide.

Solving Personal and Family Problems

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

The quality of work and family life depends on the ability to solve practical problems. These practical problems are complex, each with a varying context, requiring reasoning about what is best to believe and do in changing contextual conditions. Unfortunately, there is evidence (Perkins, 1985; Laster, 1987) to indicate that both youth and adults do not reason well to answer everyday what-to-do questions–especially problems involving actions that will affect the well-being of others. Perkins (1987) found that normal education at the high school, college, and graduate school levels had only a slight impact on everyday informal reasoning skills. In fact, with the exception of Family and Consumer Sciences, educational programs do little to develop the value reasoning skills needed to solve these human survival and family life problems.

All educators are responsible for helping students prepare for their future by developing the critical and creative thinking skills involved in solving problems. Deep, elaborative, and constructive thinking is required for learners to have meaningful learnings that can be remembered and used later. Since half of the information in any field is estimated to become outdated in six years, "students will be better equipped for the future if they are good thinkers rather than good memorizers of a fixed body of knowledge" (Willis, 1992, p. 1). Employers' competitive edge is increasingly dependent on their employees' basic thinking skills, and "workers are being challenged as never before" since they often lack the needed learning, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills (Carnevale et al., 1990).

As problems become more complex and lead to further reaching moral consequences, individuals need help in developing their moral reasoning abilities. Individual and family issues as well as many of the significant problems facing society today have complex moral dimensions. Issues such as family violence, meaningful education, quality environment, care of the young and elderly, declining moral and ethical behavior, increasing self-centeredness, and declining civic responsibility require practical, moral reasoning at family, community, and global levels. Such reasoning is necessary because the contexts of these problems are constantly changing: the global environment, people and their developmental stage, relationships between people, and value priorities.

Recent developments in cognitive psychology and home economics have led to the conclusion that thinking and learning skills can be modified. Practical intelligence, a set of learning and thinking skills needed for solving everyday problems, can be developed when adolescents are missing essential cognitive processes. Both Martin (1988) and Vulgamore (1991) were able to significantly increase their students' level of decision making by offering formal instructional activities. These findings suggest the need to formally help students develop practical problem-solving skills, including decision-making and critical-thinking processes.

Solving Personal and Family Problems

Background

Fulfilling work and family roles involves solving both scientific and practical problems and using a variety of thinking processes to solve those problems, as illustrated in Table 1. Solving both scientific and practical problems requires reasoning: reaching conclusions, inductively or deductively, from knowledge. However, scientific and practical problem-solving processes differ in the types of knowledge needed to solve the problem.

Scientific problems, such as *what is, why,* and *how* questions, require scientific reasoning in which conclusions are reached from factual knowledge and inferences gained through observations. Practical problems, on the other hand, involve value questions that require rational and moral judgments, affecting people and their well-being. Thus both factual knowledge and value knowledge are used to solve practical problems.

Practical problem solving, as identified in Table 1, is the process used to decide what is best to do when faced with a practical problem. An important component of this process is practical reasoning. Practical reasoning is the part of the practical problem-solving process required for coming to the best conclusion about what to do. Practical reasoning involves high-level thinking and deep, elaborative information processing, including both critical and creative thinking skills. Critical thinking skills such as assessing information accurately, judging the viability of alternatives, and making a decision, are important to this process. In addition, creative thinking skills such as imagining consequences, conceptualizing alternatives, and empathizing with others are important to practical reasoning.

Work and family life problems have consequences that may benefit or harm people, and therefore involve moral consequences. Because complex problems often involve many values, people frequently experience value conflicts when trying to decide between alternative actions or choices. A major component of practical reasoning is value reasoning. Value reasoning means reaching conclusions, inductively or deductively, from values or value principles. Value reasoning involves clarifying the values held by those involved in a particular problem situation, but goes beyond values clarification to consider the consequences of values and evaluate and consciously select the values that should guide actions. Fundamentally, value reasoning distinguishes practical problem solving from scientific problem solving, traditional decision making, and planning processes (See Table 1).

Practical reasoning involves determining an action or actions that have the best reasons for choosing that particular action. The best reasons are (1) reliable, truthful, relevant, and adequate supporting facts and (2) morally defensible value claims. Morally defensible value claims are reasons that show concern that the consequences of the action benefit all who are or will be affected by the act (Coombs, 1971).

For example, possible actions and their potential consequences are evaluated, using these values or value principles as criteria to decide what ought to be. Therefore, good practical reasoning involves weighing alternative courses of action and determining which course of action (1) is based on reliable, relevant, and adequate reasons, and (2) fulfills the moral value principle of best consequence–actions that benefit, not

Table 1
Thinking Processes Used in Work and Family Life Problems

Practical Problem Solving	Scientific Problem Solving	Decision Making	Planning Process
[Uses practical reasoning to answer a practical or value question concerning what to believe and do, deciding what action is **best** to take. Considers the questions: *what to do, what should be done, or what ought to be done?*]	[Uses scientific reasoning to answer theoretical or technical questions: *What is, what controls, what factors, why, how does . . . ?*]	[Uses technical steps to decide how to answer the *What to do* question: reasoning is assumed and not encouraged.]	[Uses technical steps as management tool to select, carry out, and manage projects.]
1. Analyze the situation and identify the real problem.	1. Define the problem.	1. Identify the decision to be made: Examine the goals and constraints of the situation.	1. Identify concerns.
2. Seek and evaluate information. • Contextual factors • Values and goals • Alternative actions —Technical action — Interpretive action — Empowering or emancipatory action • Consequences of actions	2. Collect information about the problem • Theories • Previous research	2. List the alternatives.	2. Set a goal.
3. Evaluate actions and potential consequences, using values and goals (especially ethical and moral value standards) and contextual factors as criteria.	3. Form a hypothesis.	3. Consider the risks.	3. Form a plan of action • Who • How • What • Why • When • Where
4. Draw conclusions and select the best action(s) based on • Values and goals —Moral and ethical —Feasible in context —Values of others involved • Facts • Imagined possibilities	4. Experiment to test the hypothesis.	4. Weigh the alternatives, e.g., as by: • Listing advantages and disadvantages	4. Act.
5. Take action.	5. Observe and record data from the experiment.	5. Select an alternative.	5. Follow up: Evaluate.
6. Reflect on decision and evaluate action.	6. Draw conclusions based entirely on facts observed in the experiment.	6. Accept responsibility.	

harm, all who are (or will be) affected with both short-term and long-term effects–to the highest degree possible within the bounds of morality (Coombs, 1971).

The planning process used in the FHA/HERO program is a management tool to guide an individual or group in selecting and carrying out projects to fit their needs and concerns. It is not a reasoning tool. Practical reasoning, as compared to the planning process in Table 1, is the most appropriate reasoning process for (1) deciding which problem or concern should be selected for action; (2) deciding which goals to set; (3) deciding who, what, when, and where the activity should take place; and (4) evaluating the success of the activity, using value standards or criteria selected as part of the goal. Practical reasoning will need to be used repeatedly in forming the plan. Encouraging students to collaboratively decide on the values they will use to decide among alternative actions or to create an action is the key to good practical reasoning.

When using the practical problem-solving process, "good thinkers" demonstrate specific behaviors. "Good thinkers"

1. Are complex thinkers
   - Open to multiple possibilities and alternatives
   - Consider alternative viewpoints
   - Use and search for evidence to support and refute alternative viewpoints
   - Anticipate and evaluate consequences of actions
   - Evaluate alternative actions with a variety of criteria or value standards
2. Are reflective and deliberate, searching extensively when appropriate
3. Believe in being rational
4. Believe thinking can be effective
5. Use intellectual standards and criteria for assessing their thinking and the thinking of others
6. Are ethical and moral thinkers
   - Morally aware–sensitive to ethical and unethical beliefs and actions and their consequences in everyday life
   - Concerned about the interests of others rather than only their own interests

Practical reasoning is a process that is needed daily in our everyday lives to make the best decisions for all affected. Individuals develop their practical reasoning abilities through individual, family, class, and organizational practical problem solving. As problems become more complex and lead to further-reaching consequences, individuals need help in developing their reasoning abilities and practical reasoning skills in larger and more complex groups.

References

Carnevale, A. P., Gainer, L. J., & Meltzer, A. S. (1990). *Workplace basics: The essential skills employers want.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Coombs, J. R. (1984a, July). Critical thinking and practical reasoning. Paper presented at the International Conference on Thinking at Harvard University.

Coombs, J. R. (1984b, November). Practical reasoning and value analysis education. Paper presented at the National Council for Social Studies Conference, Washington, DC.

Coombs, J. R., & Meux, M. (1971). Teaching strategies for value analysis. In L. Metcalf (Ed.), *Values education.* Washington, DC: National Council for the Social Studies.

Laster, J. F. (1987). Instructional strategies for teaching practical reasoning in consumer homemaking classrooms. In R. G. Thomas (Ed.), *Higher order thinking: Definition, meaning, and instructional approaches.* Washington, DC: Home Economics Education Association, (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 287 998).

Martin, J. L. (1988). The effects of a practical reasoning teaching strategy on tenth-grade students' decision making levels. Unpublished master's thesis. The Ohio State University.

Perkins, D. N. (1985). Nature of shortcomings in everyday reasoning. Unpublished manuscript. Harvard University.

Perkins, D. N. (1987). Post-primary education has little impact on informal reasoning. *Journal of Educational Psychology.*

Vulgamore, V. (1991). The effect of reading levels on eighth-grade home economics students' decision-making levels. Unpublished master's thesis. The Ohio State University.

Willis, S. (1992, June). Teaching thinking. *ASCD update.*

Learning Activities

1. Personal and family issues

a. Bring in a newspaper or magazine article relating to an issue facing families today. In small groups, share your article and make a list of things that these issues have in common. Read **Practical Family Problems** (p. 26), and decide whether or not the issues you have identified are practical problems. Justify your decision. Refer to your course syllabus or class outline and explain why the course is designed around practical problems related to family life.

Discussion Questions
- *How often do families face practical problems?*
- *Why should you be concerned about practical problems?*
- *Do you face any of these issues in your own life? Why or why not?*
- *What skills do you need in order to be able to solve practical problems?*

b. Make a list of ways that you have seen people go about solving problems, such as those listed below. Give an example of a situation in which a family might use each method. Examine **Comparing Reasoning and Nonreasoning** (p. 27) and identify the consequences of using each of these methods to solve practical family problems.

(1) Impulse
(2) Habit
(3) Tradition
(4) Reasoning

Discussion Questions
- *What are the characteristics of each of these methods?*
- *Which methods are you most likely to use when solving problems? Why?*
- *Which method is best for resolving practical family problems?*
- *What is a good decision? A poor decision?*
- *Is it possible to use reasoning and make a poor decision? Why or why not?*

c. In small groups, choose a practical family problem identified in Activity 1a and create two case studies or role-plays: one in which a family uses a nonreasoning approach to solve the problem and the other in which the family uses reasoning to solve the problem. Share your case studies or perform your role-plays for the class. Explain the consequences of each problem-solving approach.

Solving Personal and Family Problems

2. Practical problem solving

a. In six cooperative learning groups, read **REASON Through Practical Family Problems** (p. 28). Define unfamiliar terms. Choose one of the six components of the REASON model and design a poster about that component. Display your poster in the classroom, explaining the component and why it is important to the reasoning process. Identify other processes associated with problem solving that you may have learned in other courses at school, such as decision making, the FHA/HERO Planning Process, or the scientific method. Compare and contrast these processes with the practical problem-solving process as outlined in the REASON model.

Discussion Questions

- *How can you use the practical problem-solving process as you decide what to do about practical family problems?*
- *What are the advantages of using this process? The disadvantages?*
- *What skills will family members need to use the process effectively?*
- *Why is it important for families to use this process when solving practical family problems?*

Teacher Note: Students may have a variety of experience with the practical problem-solving process, depending on the Work and Family Life Courses taken previously to Family Relations. The above activity can be modified according to variations in experience. As a class, ask students to list features of the practical problem-solving process, then compare the list to those characteristics and components on the think sheet. If students are very familiar with the process, discuss the need to use it with practical family problems. The emphasis of problem solving in this course should be on collaborative family problem solving rather than on individual problem solving.

b. Watch a teacher demonstrate how to use the practical problem-solving process by reasoning through the practical problem below. As the teacher demonstrates the process, complete a **Practical Family Problems Think Sheet** (p. 29) that includes information that a family might need to make a decision about this problem. Explain the characteristics of the teacher's problem solving that indicate he or she used reasoning when solving this particular problem.

(1) The Simpson family watches a lot of television. Grandma Simpson, who lives with the family, has the television on all day, and when her two grandchildren come home from school, they watch television while doing their homework. Grandma gets upset when the children fight over which

programs to watch. Grandma has talked with Mr. and Mrs. Simpson about this problem, and they are all worried that perhaps the children watch too much television. There are some programs that Mr. and Mrs. Simpson really enjoy watching, and they know that Grandma and the children also have favorite programs. The Simpsons are also aware that some of the programs the family members watch can be educational, while others seem to be a waste of time. What should the Simpsons do?

Teacher Note: The next activity is designed for cooperative learning groups, but can be modified to accommodate specific classroom circumstances. The specific group assignments can also be set up as learning centers around the classroom, with groups or individual students rotating among the centers until all skills have been studied. Another strategy is to use each activity with the whole class.

c. In cooperative learning groups, choose one of the following handouts related to a specific practical problem-solving skill. Read the handout provided as well as other classroom resources. Present that skill to the class, defining terms and explaining how that particular skill is important to solving practical problems. Use the discussion questions provided on the handout and conduct enrichment activities with your class.

(1) **Generating Choices and Consequences** (p. 30)
(2) **Using Factual Information When Reasoning** (p. 31)
(3) **Using Value Information When Reasoning** (p. 32)
(4) **Making Ethical Decisions** (p. 33-34)
(5) **Providing Good Reasons for Choices** (p. 35)

d. **Action Project:** Keep a journal about how you and your family solve practical family problems. For each problem your family solves, write a statement of the problem, choices considered, consequences considered, the solution selected, and justification. Record the actual outcome of the solution to each problem. Evaluate whether or not your solutions were best for your family and others.

3. Evaluation of outcomes

a. Respond to the question, "How should a family go about evaluating their actions with regard to practical family problems?" Make a list of questions to use when evaluating choices about practical family problems, such as those listed below. Explain how these questions are related to the practical problem-solving process.

(1) Do our actions reflect the decision made?
(2) Are our actions solving the original problem?
(3) Are our intended actions achievable in this situation?
(4) Are our actions ethical?
(5) Do our actions enhance the well-being of family members and others?
(6) Will our actions result in positive long-term consequences?
(7) Would we take the same actions again?
(8) Do our actions reflect the best we can do in this situation?
(9) What have we learned?
(10) How will we handle similar situations in the future?

Discussion Questions

- *Why is it important to evaluate the outcomes of practical problem solving?*
- *What can families learn from their experiences in solving practical family problems?*
- *How can solving practical problems together make families stronger?*

b. **FHA/HERO:** Organize a chapter meeting to encourage and develop family reasoning skills. In small groups, create a family situation for your group, assigning each group member a family role such as parent, sibling, or extended family member. Choose one of the practical family problems identified in Activity 1a and complete the **Practical Family Problems Think Sheet** (p. 29) as you reason through the problem. Exchange think sheets with another group and award a possible five points to that group for each of the criteria listed below. Suggest changes or additions, if necessary, to raise the score. Plan a chapter celebration for those who have mastered the REASON model used on the think sheet.

(1) Considered several alternatives
(2) Identified short-term and long-term consequences of each possible choice for family members
(3) Explained how each choice reflected or did not reflect the goals and values of the family
(4) Provided reasons to show why their choice was ethical
(5) Provided reasons to show why their choice was relevant to the issue
(6) Provided reasons to show why their choice was based on correct factual evidence

c. Read **Reflection Notebook Assignment** (p. 37). Obtain a notebook for your journal. Choose an article related to a practical family problem and report on the article in your journal. Focus on how the practical problem-solving process should be used to solve the problem identified in the article.

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Given case studies, clarify personal and family issues by stating the problem to be solved, identifying the type of problem, and describing at least two factors affecting the problem.

2. Given case studies, create at least three alternatives for solving each problem.

3. Given choices to a problem situation, evaluate potential consequences of each alternative choice by listing at least two positive and two negative consequences of each choice.

4. Given case studies, use criteria and standards to make ethical decisions. Test the decision by applying questions used to determine whether a solution is ethical.

5. Given a solution to a problem situation, evaluate the outcomes of the solution by identifying short-term and long-term consequences of the action taken and determining if the problem was solved.

6. Given a practical problem-solving worksheet and a sample practical problem, use each component of the practical problem-solving process to reach a justifiable solution.

Classroom Experiences

1. In cooperative learning groups, choose a specific skill related to solving practical problems. Research that skill and present your findings to the class, defining terms and explaining how that particular skill is important to solving practical problems.

2. In small groups, choose a practical problem and use the practical problem-solving process to resolve that problem. Present your solution to the class and justify your decision.

3. Choose an article related to a family relations problem and report on the article in your journal. Focus on how the practical problem-solving process should be used to solve the problem identified in the article.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Keep a journal about how you solve family relations practical problems. For each problem you solve, write a statement of the problem, choices considered, consequences considered, the solution selected, and justification. Record the actual outcome of the solution to each problem. Evaluate whether or not your solutions were best for you and others.

Practical Family Problems

A *problem* is a situation in which something must be solved or worked out, and that involves selecting from many possible solutions. Families face a variety of problems. Learning how to solve problems collaboratively is part of developing a strong family.

There are different kinds of problems. . .

Scientific problems involve specific knowledge and "how to" questions. Solving scientific problems involves learning cause and effect or functional relationships among varying phenomena, such as concepts, principles, and procedures.

Practical problems are different from scientific problems. Solving practical problems involves deciding what to believe and do, especially about value questions. These types of problems require both value knowledge and factual, scientific knowledge when deciding what is best to do. Practical problems typically affect people and their well-being.

Practical family problems require deciding what should or ought to be done for family and family members' best interests. Some examples of practical problems that families face are as follows:

- How should we deal with family conflict?
- How should we balance work time with family time?
- What should we do about fulfilling family responsibilities?

These types of problems that families face have several distinct characteristics that make them different from scientific problems. Practical family problems

- Require deciding what should or ought to be done
- Involve conflicting values
- Are complicated and thus messy to solve
- Frequently have no one right solution
- Have consequences for self, family members, and often for others outside the family
- Are action problems
- Involve the thoughts, feelings, values, and needs of all family members
- Are dependent on the context or situation in which the problem occurs
- Are ill-structured: can be unclear in terms of the information needed to solve the problem

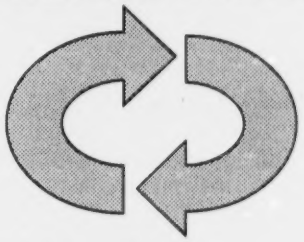
Write three practical family problems that your family or a family you know has faced recently.

1.

2.

3.

Comparing Reasoning and Nonreasoning



Nonreasoning approaches might include

(1) Acting on impulse
(2) Blindly accepting a solution
(3) Making a choice based on habit or tradition
(4) Choosing a solution because it is what everyone else is doing

A reasoning approach includes

(1) Comparing alternatives and their consequences
(2) Evaluating alternatives, using criteria
(3) Reflecting on long-term effects on all those involved
(4) Justifying choices with good reasons and criteria

Reasoning may be prudential—based on what is best for self, or moral—based on what is best for self and others.

A nonreasoning approach is being used when

- A choice is made without thinking.
- Situational and environmental factors, alternatives, and consequences are not considered.
- Information is not actively sought.
- Values are not questioned or examined; facts are not used.
- Others' decisions are not questioned.
- Results may be harmful to self and others.
- The results may or may not promote the well-being of self and others.
- The decision is usually not workable for the long-term consequences of the situation.

A reasoning approach is being used when

- A choice is made considering context, alternatives, consequences, and ethical implications.
- Situational and environmental factors, alternatives, and consequences are considered.
- Accurate, relevant, and reliable information is sought and evaluated.
- Values are examined and supported by facts.
- A reasoned choice is made.
- The results are satisfactory for the decision maker and others.*
- The results promote the well-being of self and others.*
- The decision is workable for the long-term consequences of the situation for self and others.*

*Characteristics of ethical reasoning.

REASON Through Practical Family Problems

In order to reason through practical family problems and find the solution that is in the best interest of all family members, it is important to consider many aspects of the problem, the situation, the possible solutions, and the consequences of each choice. The **REASON** model can be a guide for thinking through complex practical family problems. The components do not need to be used in the order given, but each component is important to the reasoning process.

Recognize the Problem:	Practical family problems can be very complex, and sometimes just identifying the problem itself can be a real challenge. Each practical family problem has a unique context, and the context of the problem can influence the solution. At this point, it is important to consider what family members really want to happen when the problem is resolved; in other words, to determine the "desired ends."	*What is the problem?* *Why is it important to address the problem?* *What is the context of the problem?* *What caused the problem?* *Who is involved?* *What factors about this problem will affect the decision about what to do?* • *What resources are available?* • *What situational factors affect the situation?* *What goals do we have for the solution to the problem?* *What are the desired ends we want to achieve?*
Evaluate Information Needed to Solve the Problem:	Solving practical problems requires both factual and value information. Factual information includes the concepts and knowledge that will help in developing and evaluating choices. Value information includes personal values, the values of others involved, and values that will help family members make an ethical choice. Values are used as criteria to decide what to believe and do.	*What factual information is needed?* *Where can we obtain this factual information?* *What are our personal values regarding this problem situation? Which of these values are most important?* *What are the values of others involved in this situation?* *How will those values influence our decision about what to do?* *What values will we use as criteria to decide which choice is best?*
Analyze Choices and Consequences:	There is always more than one choice involved in a practical family problem. Sometimes there may be many choices. Even doing nothing about a problem is a choice. Each choice carries with it possible consequences—consequences for self, family members, and others outside the family, as well as both short-term and long-term consequences.	*What choices are possible?* *What are the short-term and long-term consequences of each choice?* *What are the consequences for each family member? For those outside the family?*
Select the Best Choice:	Making a decision about which alternative is best means evaluating each alternative against the value information and desired ends.	*Which choice best reflects the values we have and the ends we desire regarding this problem?* *Which choice would result in the most positive consequences for our family and for others?* *Which choice works best for this particular situation?*
Outline and Implement a Plan for Action:	Problems are not solved until a reasoned decision is put into action. Action requires careful planning.	*What skills do we need to carry out this choice?* *What resources do we need to carry out this choice?* *What barriers exist that might prevent us from taking action? How can we overcome these barriers?* *How can we organize the various tasks needed to achieve this solution?*
Note the Results of Your Action(s):	Evaluating the outcome of a choice will help determine the success of the solution and what was learned from solving the problem.	*Would we make the same choice again? Why or why not?* *What have we learned?* *How will this problem-solving experience affect our problem solving in the future?* *Did our actions enhance the well-being of all family members and others outside the family?* *Were our actions ethical?*

Practical Family Problems Think Sheet

One way to make sure family members are reasoning carefully through problems is to use the steps of the REASON model. Complete the checklist below as you solve practical family problems.

_____ **R** ecognize the Problem. State the problem to be solved.

_____ **E** valuate Information Needed to Solve the Problem.

Family Goals and Values	Factual Information	Factors Affecting the Situation

_____ **A** nalyze Choices and Consequences

Choice	Consequences for Family Members and Others	How Choice Does or Does Not Reflect Criteria for Solving the Problem

_____ **S** elect the Best Choice. Provide good reasons for your choice. Explain how the solution reflects the criteria below.

- Relevant to the problem
- Ethical (positive long-term effects on all involved)
- Workable for this situation
- Based on relevant, reliable factual information

_____ **O** utline and Implement a Plan for Action. Identify the actions you need to take, when they will be done, and who will do them.

_____ **N** ote the Results of Your Actions. After you have taken action, reflect on whether or not your choice was best. Identify things you learned from solving this problem.

Generating Choices and Consequences

Key Points to Consider

Practical problems have many possible solutions. These possible solutions are called choices or alternatives. When you are making a decision, it is good to consider as many choices as possible, including the alternative of doing nothing about the problem.

Each possible alternative, if selected would result in consequences. Imagining what will happen if you act on possible choices can help you predict whether or not that choice is best. The consequences you imagine may or may not actually happen, but imagining consequences will help you select the best choice.

Since practical problems affect not only you, but others around you, it is important to consider the consequences of alternatives for yourself and others. In addition, the short-term consequences (those that might happen immediately following your choice) and the long-term consequences (those that might happen a month, a year, or a number of years after your choice) may be different. You should consider both short-term and long-term consequences for each alternative to make the best choice.

Questions for Discussion

- How many choices are usually available for solving practical problems?
- What are the advantages of considering many different choices when solving practical problems?
- Why is it important to consider the consequences of each choice?
- How will these consequences affect your decision about which choice is best?
- Why is it important to consider the consequences for others when making choices about practical problems?

Enrichment Activities

1. Choose five family relations problems and write each at the top of a large sheet of newsprint. In five groups, choose one of the problems and list at least three possible choices to that problem on the newsprint. Trade sheets with that of another group, read the possible choices on the page and list possible short-term consequences of each choice. Trade sheets again and add long-term consequences for each choice. Retain your original paper and put a "+" beside those consequences you believe to be positive and a "-" beside those consequences you believe are negative.

2. Choose a practical family problem and make a choices-and-consequences chart for that problem. Place possible choices in one column and short-term consequences, long-term consequences, and consequences for others, in remaining columns. In pairs, trade papers and add consequences to your partner's paper as needed.

Using Factual Information When Reasoning

Key Points to Consider

Solving practical family problems requires both value information and factual information. Using factual information when solving practical problems can help families make choices that are best for all family members and others. As families reason through problems, two questions can help with regard to factual information:

- *Do we have enough relevant factual information to solve this problem?*
- *Is the information we have reliable?*

There are many sources of information for solving problems. As families solve practical problems, they may seek information from these sources:

Advice from Others: friends, other family members, teachers, experts
Media Sources: television, radio, videotapes
Publications: newspapers, magazines
Government or community agencies: mental health organizations, support groups, hospital wellness programs
Personal observation or experience

Seeking information requires the ability to evaluate whether the information is reliable and relevant to the practical problem situation. When seeking information, family members need good listening skills and the ability to question others to determine value perspectives behind information. When seeking advice from others, it is important to consider their values, how those values influence the advice given, and how those values compare with those of the family solving the problem.

The quality of factual information may vary from helpful to misleading, depending on the source. How do you know when information is reliable? The questions below can help you evaluate sources of information.

(1) Does the author or source of information have appropriate credentials?
(2) Does the author or source of information reflect a bias? If so, what are the consequences of this bias?
(3) Is the information up-to-date?
(4) Is the information presented in a logical way and supported by reputable and extensive research?

Questions for Discussion

- What are the consequences of solving practical family problems without adequate information?
- What are the consequences of solving practical family problems with unreliable information?
- Why is factual information important to practical problem solving?

Enrichment Activities

1. Choose a practical family problem and list all possible sources of information for solving that problem.
2. Create a display of sources of information for solving practical family problems. Evaluate the various sources for reliability. Share your evaluations with the class. Justify your choices.
3. Create a poster illustrating questions to use when evaluating sources of information. Display in the classroom.

Using Value Information When Reasoning

Key Points to Consider

A value is a principle or quality that is valuable or desirable. Solving practical family problems requires the consideration of value information as well as factual information. Practical problems often involve conflicting values. Some value perspectives that can conflict are

(1) Values concerning self-interest vs. values that are in the interest of the family good
(2) Values concerning self or family interest vs. values that are in the interest of the public good
(3) Values that foster competition vs. values that foster cooperation
(4) Values that foster interdependence or independence vs. values that foster dependence
(5) Values that reflect individualism vs. values that reflect a commitment to the family group

Being aware of values and considering the values of others can help families make better decisions about practical problems. Each time families make a decision regarding a practical problem, certain types of values are represented in that decision. In the list below, types of values are described.

Types of Values

Aesthetic values reflect a concern for appearance and beauty.
Economic values involve cost control, efficiency, and management.
Health and safety values deal with physical well-being.
Environmental values reflect a concern for the state of the environment.
Intellectual values are concerned with education, reasoning, and logic.
Religious values reflect a concern for following religious doctrine.
Prudential values reflect a concern for one's own interest.
Moral values involve others' well-being.

Questions for Discussion

- Why is value information important when making decisions about family relations problems?
- What types of values are most likely to influence your decisions about practical problems? Why?

Enrichment Activities

1. For each type of value, give an example of action taken related to family relations that is based on that value.
2. Design a bulletin board entitled, "Families' Values in Action." Collect newspaper and magazine articles or create case studies that illustrate how families' values influence behavior. Throughout the course, take turns adding articles or case studies and explain how the values affect family behavior, how values may have changed or been reexamined over time, and how value choices can represent conflicting perspectives.
3. Observe the actions of family members you know for examples of different types of values guiding their actions. Try to identify the specific values that seem to guide their behaviors. Share examples with the class.

Making Ethical Decisions

Key Points to Consider

The word *ethics* is defined as the moral principles or values governing an individual or group. Many professions such as law and medicine have codes of ethics. The principles set forth in these codes of ethics help professionals make choices that will be best for everyone involved.

Since the choices families make about practical problems involve more than one person, it is important that families consider what is ethical when deciding which choice is best. For instance, a parent who is deciding whether or not to take a job offer in another city might not only consider the impact of his choice on his own career, but might also consider the impact on his children, spouse, and other family members. Considering the impact of his decision on others will help him make a more ethical decision.

Universal values are those values that transcend culture, time, and religions to establish standards for ethical conduct. These values form the basis of many of our laws and regulations as a society. Examples of universal values are given below. These values can be used as guidelines for making ethical choices.

Honesty: Honest people are truthful and sincere.
Integrity: People with integrity behave in a manner that is consistent with ethical beliefs.
Trustworthiness: People worthy of trust keep promises and fulfill commitments.
Loyalty: Loyal people provide support and commitment to others.
Fairness: Fair people are committed to justice, the equal treatment of individuals, and respect for diversity.
Caring: A caring person shows concern for the well-being of self, others, and the environment.
Respect: Respectful people have confidence in their beliefs and values and acknowledge, understand, and support the rights of others to express their beliefs.
Responsibility: A responsible person contributes to the family, his or her workplace, and community (local/global) in positive ways and encourages the participation of others.
Pursuit of Excellence: In the pursuit of excellence, people take pride in their work, give their best efforts, reflect on the results of their work, and apply knowledge gained to subsequent tasks.
Accountability: A quality in individuals whereby each knows, understands, considers, and accepts the impact and consequences of personal actions and decisions.

When deciding whether or not a decision is ethical, the following questions can be used for reflection:

1. Does this choice have positive long-term consequences for you and others?
2. Would you be willing to change places with the person or people most affected by the choice?
3. Would this be the best thing to do in a similar situation?
4. Would there be positive results if everyone did things this way?
5. Will this choice contribute to the physical and psychological well-being of you? Your family? Your group?

Making Ethical Decisions *(continued)*

Questions for Discussion

- Why is it important to think about whether or not our decisions are ethical in families?
- Why is it important to be aware of universal values?
- How do actions your family has taken recently reflect universal values?
- Why should your family be concerned about making ethical choices with regard to practical family problems?
- Is it difficult to make ethical choices? Why or why not?
- Can there be more than one ethical solution to a given problem? Why or why not?

Enrichment Activities

1. Make a poster illustrating the Universal Values and display it in class.
2. Collect newspaper or magazine articles about family actions that reflect each of the universal values. Incorporate these into the poster you made in the above activity.
3. Collect newspaper or magazine articles about actions that you would consider to be unethical. Justify your decision.
4. Obtain a copy of codes of ethics from various professions. Obtain copies of your school behavior guidelines or code of conduct. Compare these guidelines and determine how each represents the universal values.
5. Divide into two groups. Have the first group write a code of ethics for teachers. Have the second group write a code of ethics for students. Compare your codes of ethics and explain how these codes reflect ethical values.
6. Write a code of ethics for families.

Providing Good Reasons for Choices

Key Points to Consider

Perhaps the most difficult part of solving practical family problems is deciding which choice is best. Reasoning well means that families will be able to provide good reasons for their choice. What is a "good" reason when it comes to justifying a solution to a practical family problem? A "good" reason is

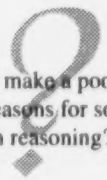
- relevant to the problem
- supported by relevant, reliable factual information
- ethically defensible

Being able to provide good reasons to support solutions to practical family problems shows that families have considered potential consequences, family goals and values, ethical criteria, and adequate, reliable information.

Reasoning errors can divert attention from the real issue and result in reasons that don't support the answer to the question or issue. Examples of reasoning errors are

- Using a word or phrase in two different ways, resulting in unclear meanings
- Appealing to a questionable authority without examining evidence authorities are using
- Attacking a person or a person's background
- Name calling
- Using popularity arguments such as "Everyone . . ."
- Presenting a faulty dilemma
- Providing only one or two choices: Either-or errors
- Using generalities
- Oversimplifying
- Diverting attention from the real issue
- Confusing "What should be" with "What is"
- Confusing naming with explaining
- Reflecting searching for perfect solutions
- Begging the question
- Appealing only to emotion
- Using emotional fallacies such as the bandwagon appeal, flattery, or false analogies
- Using deceptive statistics

Questions for Discussion



- Is it possible to use reasoning and still make a poor decision? Why or why not?
- Why is it important to provide good reasons for solutions to practical family problems?
- What conditions contribute to errors in reasoning?

Enrichment Activities

1. In small groups, choose a practical family problem, identify several choices for solving that problem, and complete **Which Choice is Best?** (p. 36). Share your reasons for the solution with the class and explain why those are good reasons for your choice.
2. Observe a television situation comedy about a family. Identify a practical family problem faced in the program and the solution selected by the family. Write the reasons they have used to select that choice and explain whether or not you believe their reasons to be good reasons.

Which Choice is Best?

When families solve problems, they make choices among alternatives about what should be done. How do they know which alternative is best for all family members? In the space below, write alternatives that could be used to solve a practical family problem. Then use the following chart to test which alternative might be best in that situation.

Alternative A:	**Alternative B:**	**Alternative C:**

CRITERIA	Alternative A		Alternative B		Alternative C		Justification of Response
A. Does this choice reflect the criteria you have established for solving this problem? Desired ends? Values of self and others?	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	
B. Is this choice based on adequate, reliable information?							
C. Is this choice workable for the situation?							
D. Is this choice ethical?							
1. Does this choice have positive long-term consequences for family members and others?							
2. Would family members be willing to change places with the person or people most affected by the choice?							
3. Would this be the best choice to do in a similar situation?							
4. Would there be good results if all families did things this way?							
5. Will this choice contribute to the overall well-being of all family members? The community? Society?							

Select an alternative and list three reasons why that alternative would be the best choice.

1.

2.

3.

Reflection Notebook Assignment

To provide an opportunity for you to reflect on family relations topics and issues, keep a reflection notebook throughout the course. The purpose of this assignment is

(1) To reflect on topics researched in class

(2) To read magazine, newspaper, and journal articles about family relations topics and relate them to what is studied in class

You may want to use a three-ring notebook for this assignment so you can add and take out pages, including copies of articles. Two kinds of entries will be part of your reflection notebook. One type of journal entry will be a reflection of what you are learning about in class. Your teacher will give you topics and reflection questions for these entries.

The second type of journal entry is an analysis of an article related to practical family problems. Select a magazine, newspaper, or journal article about a family relations topic. Read the article and write a notebook entry that includes

Heading: Title of article, author, source (including date of publication)

Summary: A one-page summary of the article and how it relates to material studied in the family relations class

Analysis: An analysis of the information in the article using the questions below:

- What types of information were presented in the article?
- What family relations issues were addressed?
- What types of values were directly or indirectly addressed in the article?
- How could I use this information when solving practical family problems I might face?
- Is the information presented reliable? Why or why not?

An article summary should be written and added to your reflection notebook at least once every two weeks. In addition to the article summaries, you will be asked to write and reflect on classroom material and activities periodically throughout the course. Working with your teacher, write the dates you will be turning in your reflection notebook in the spaces to the right. At these intervals you will work with your teacher to assess your progress on this assignment.

Assignment Due Dates
_____
_____
_____
_____

As a class, decide on the criteria you will use to assess your reflection assignment. For the first type of journal entry, you might consider the following scale and criteria:

	4 Well done	3 Acceptable	2 Improvement needed	1 Not acceptable
1. Related to topic	4	3	2	1
2. Shows understanding of topic	4	3	2	1
3. Length meets requirements	4	3	2	1
4. Effort	4	3	2	1

For the second type of journal entry, you might use the same scale with the following criteria:

1. Article related to family issue
2. Article information reported completely
3. Article summarized
4. Analysis of article information

Relating to Others

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about relating to others?

Process Competency 0.0.3: Relate to others in positive, caring ways

Competency Builders:

0.0.3.1 Identify significance of caring, respectful relationships
0.0.3.2 Create strategies for relating to people of different ages, abilities, genders, and cultures*
0.0.3.3 Communicate effectively**
0.0.3.4 Express personal feelings, needs, and ideas constructively
0.0.3.5 Manage conflict
0.0.3.6 Seek help when needed***

*This competency builder is addressed in Content Module 1: Analyzing the Significance of Families.
**This competency builder is addressed in Content Module 5: Developing Communication Patterns.
***This competency builder is addressed in Content Module 6: Dealing with Stress, Conflict, and Crises.

Supporting Concepts:

1. Caring, respectful relationships
2. Constructive expression of feelings, needs, and ideas
3. Conflict management

Teacher Note: Since the four process competencies of managing work and family responsibilities, solving personal and family problems, relating to others, and assuming a leadership role represent skills essential to strong families, the four process modules introducing these skills should be taught at the beginning of the Family Relations course. This module introduces the concept of communicating in caring, respectful ways and establishes the Family Relations Research Teams that will be used throughout the course. Refer to **Overview of the Family Relations Resource Guide Process Modules** (p. 3) to determine the focus of each process module.

Since the content of the process competencies remains relatively unchanged over the six core course areas of the Work and Family Life program, the teacher background information is the same as that printed in previous guides. The learning activities, however, have been designed specifically for this course area and complement the content modules found in the rest of the guide.

Relating to Others

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

Interpersonal, group effectiveness skills are the keystones to maintaining friendships, a stable family, a successful career, and strong communities. Yet, no one is born with these skills. Each person must learn these skills and choose to use them. Although many students learn the needed social skills in their families and through community experiences, others lack basic social skills. Frequently, this ineptitude persists into adulthood. These students are often isolated, alienated, and disadvantaged in career training programs. Such "poor peer relationships have widespread immediate and long-term effects on students' cognitive and social development, well-being, happiness, success, and psychological health" (Johnson et al., 1990, p. 87).

The need to develop interpersonal relationship skills in the Work and Family Life Program is supported by six major reasons.

1. Changes in families and society reduce the time and other resources available to enable parents to model, nurture, and develop the social skills needed for our complex contemporary life. Children learn their social skills through their family experiences, yet hectic schedules limit family interaction time. According to one study, typical American adolescents spend only about five minutes a day alone with their fathers and 40 minutes alone with their mothers. On the average, an additional hour is spent with both parents. With the addition of about 15 minutes with other adults, the adolescents sampled in this study spent about two hours a day with adults other than teachers (Csikiszentmihaly & McCormack, 1986). Mealtime conversation also is declining. Of 2,004 families polled in 1976, 74 percent of those with children ages 7 to 17 ate dinner together frequently. By 1986 this number had dropped to 63 percent (Roper Organization, 1987; Rubenstein, 1988). With smaller families—3.5 family members in 1950 to 2.6 in 1990 (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992), interaction time with siblings is even reduced. Furthermore, with increasing numbers of children living with only one parent, opportunities to observe parent communication, negotiation, and conflict resolution is also limited. Consequently, opportunities for developing communication, negotiating skills, and problem solving at home are decreasing.

2. Strong caring relationship skills will strengthen families. Such skills will help reduce the currently increasing incidents of suffering experienced from family violence, divorce, and dysfunctional families. Understanding differences in the needs of family members and others, and having the skills to respond in sincere, supportive ways rather than in dominating, violent, or uncompromising ways would help reduce these rising statistics and encourage optimum development of family, workplace, and community members.

3. Relationships encourage or constrain the development of children and adults (Thomas, 1992). As shown in Figure 1, caring, respectful relationships encourage development (Bronfenbrenner, 1990; McGovern, 1990). Insensitive, unresponsive, intrusive, and dominating relationships constrain

development. Sensitive friends, colleagues, spouses, parents, employers, and community and government leaders obtain information from the verbal and nonverbal cues of others, then respond to those needs in ways that meet the needs of those significant others. Reciprocity builds on this sensitivity and responsiveness to insure mutual give and take—mutual sharing—communication at its highest level. Finally, optimum relationships are supportive. Supportive relationships are caring relationships that help the other person meet his or her needs and pursue his or her interests. Such support involves deep, reflective, thoughtful, and deliberate planning to create an enriching, empowering environment rather than to control or dominate the other person (Thomas, 1992).

Figure 1

Interaction Patterns That ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT	Interaction Patterns That CONSTRAIN DEVELOPMENT
SUPPORT convey trust, interest, confidence; provide an enriching environment that assists the other person in meeting their needs and pursuing their interests.	DOMINATION direct and control other person's thoughts, feelings, actions, and activities for purposes that do not include that person's needs or interests; exert power over other person.
RECIPROCITY practice exchange, mutual give and take, turn-taking	INTRUSIVENESS interfere with other person's goals and activities
RESPONSIVENESS respond to other person's needs in ways that meet them	UNRESPONSIVENESS take actions unconnected to other person's needs
SENSITIVITY accurately read other person's cues, signals, messages	INSENSITIVITY miss other person's cues, signals, messages

Adapted from Thomas (1992a).

4. To increase their competitive edge, American employers need employees with these interpersonal skills and an appreciation for diversity. Higher productivity, product quality, and increased quality of work life have been linked conclusively with the team approach in the workplace (Carnevale et al., 1990, p. 32). Success depends on individuals at all levels of the work force getting along with each other. Increased cultural diversity and participative problem solving and decision making increase potential disagreements and the need for group effectiveness skills. Good communication, cooperative teamwork, and negotiating skills provide the foundation for successful leadership and organizational effectiveness.

5. As new technology continues to be introduced into all aspects of our society, caring, respectful relationships in the private and public domains are needed as a counterbalance. John Naisbitt observed that with the continuing invasion of technology into our factories, offices, schools, homes, and health care systems, "we must learn to balance the material wonders of technology with the spiritual

demands of our human nature" (1982, p. 40). As technology continues to invade and at times dominate our lives, the need for a compensatory "high touch" of caring, respectful relationships is basic to meeting the "spiritual demands of our human nature."

6. As women make life choices that take them away from caregiving occupations and their families, the need to help both males and females develop loving ways of life is imperative. Today more than three quarters of the caregiving in our own country continues to be provided by women (Sommers & Shields, 1988). Although the exploitation of women as caregivers needs to be changed, the prospect of women ceasing to provide caregiving is horrendous (Noddings, 1988). Who will care for us, as adults, when we are tired, dejected, depressed, misunderstood?

Background

Relationships with others are an inescapable part of everyday life. In relationships with peers, family members, employers, colleagues, and authority figures, interactions continuously move through a relationship life cycle (Portnoy, 1986). This model is particularly useful in illustrating the development of working relationships, such as in classrooms or workplaces, but also reflects the stages experienced in personal and family relationships. Seven stages are included in the relationship life cycle:

1. Establishing trust
2. Becoming acquainted
3. Forming attachments
4. Clarifying roles and expectations, negotiating to reach consensus, and modeling
5. Integration and commitment
6. Stability

JOLT—Disturbance in relationship

7. Instability

At any time, a disturbance may interfere with the relationship, resulting in the seventh stage, instability. Basically, when individual or group needs are not met, a relationship becomes strained and unstable. For example, one person's behavior may be inconsistent with the expectations of another, or a role change may create instability in the relationship. Misunderstandings may also cause relationship instability. Such instability may be resolved by reexamining and clarifying roles, redefining expectations, renegotiating, and possibly modeling.

Basic interpersonal skills are needed throughout this relationship life cycle in all contexts. These basic skills include communicating (speaking and listening by mutually sharing meanings and feelings), empathizing with and correctly identifying the emotions of others, working cooperatively with others, negotiating for consensus, and resolving conflict (Carnevale et al., 1990; Bolin 1990; Westlake & Westlake, 1992). The Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills specified the following interpersonal competencies as essential for the workplace:

Relating to Others

- Participates as member of a team—contributes to group effort
- Teaches others new skills
- Serves clients—works to satisfy clients' expectations
- Exercises leadership—communicates ideas to justify positions, persuades and convinces others, responsibly challenges existing procedures and policies
- Negotiates—works toward agreements involving exchange of resources, resolves divergent interests
- Works with diversity—works well with men and women from diverse backgrounds

How we relate to others as we use these skills depends on many factors, including one's individual differences and identity development. People differ in many ways. We differ in age and gender, physically and developmentally, economically, culturally, racially, ethnically, religiously, and occupationally. From our first encounters with others, these differences are apparent and influence our trusting others, becoming acquainted, and forming attachments.

Individual differences can be empowering in relationships or oppressive. While accepting and valuing cultural, racial, and ethnic differences can empower, discrimination based on ethnocentrism, racism, prejudice, and stereotyping is oppressive and limits self-formation and self-actualization. When development is limited by oppression, society cannot benefit from the contributions of all its people, and the quality of life suffers for all. Understanding these differences begins with understanding cultural concepts:

1. *Culture:* the way of life of a people. The sum of a people's learned behavior patterns, attitudes, and material things. Within a country, cultural groups may differ in ethnicity, race, and/or religion.

2. *Ethnicity:* the affiliation of members of a group who retain the customs, language, or social values of a group. Ethnocentrism occurs when individuals believe that their group is superior personally and culturally and must be protected and defended.

3. *Racism:* systematic oppression of one race by another. Racism occurs at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and/or cultural level. Like ethnocentrism, racism may be overt or covert, intentional or unintentional.

4. *Prejudice:* judgment or opinion about others made before one has the facts, and generalizing and applying that judgment to individuals. Such prejudices may become stereotypes when the judgments and opinions become a fixed image of the characteristics and/or behavior of the members of a group. Stereotypes tend to dehumanize people by ignoring their characteristics as individuals. Bigotry occurs when an individual is intolerant of beliefs and cultures other than his or her own.

5. *Discrimination:* any kind of action taken to deprive members of a certain group of their civil rights. Civil rights are the freedoms that people are entitled to as members of a community or nation. In democratic societies, civil rights include equal opportunity for schooling and employment, and equal treatment under the laws.

Relating to Others

As we develop our identities (our consciousness about who we are and how we are alike and different from others), we have varying attitudes toward ourselves and others, and consequently, relate to others in varying ways, depending upon our level of identity with the minority or dominant groups. Depending upon our individual differences and our perceptions of whether or not we are in the minority or majority, we may relate to others who are different from us in appreciating or depreciating ways; with anger, anxiety, guilt, fear or tolerance; in oppressing, patronizing, or controlling ways; or in nurturing, inclusive, open relationships.

At the highest levels of identity, we appreciate ourselves and have selective appreciation of others who are from minority and majority groups. We are all, at one time or another, from a minority or majority group. Throughout life, we find ourselves in groups that have members who are like or different from us in age, gender, race, religion, ethnic background, ability, or occupation.

The overall affective outcome of interpersonal relationships is caring. Developing an ethic of caring is essential if students are to build healthy relationships with peers, family members, and coworkers. Nell Noddings (1988) has described caring as an ethical orientation to relationships. The ethic for caring is concerned with moral behavior and not just moral judgment. Caring effectively requires interpersonal reasoning, skill, and moral affect. The power and necessity of interpersonal reasoning is described by Kari Waerness:

> Caring is about relations between at least two people. One of them (the carer) shows concern, consideration, affection, devotion towards the other (the cared for). The one needing care is invaluable to the one providing care, and when the former is suffering pain or discomfort, the latter identifies with her or him and attends to alleviating it. Adult healthy people feel a need to be cared for by others in many different situations. Worn out, dejected, tired, depressed—there are many adjectives to describe states in which what we need or desire is for others 'to care for us.' In such situations we may feel that we have a right to our need for care being met. This means there must be others who feel that it is their duty or desire to honor this right (1984, p. 134).

To prepare all students for their teamwork roles in the workplace and their future families, these skills need to be developed now by students who have not developed these skills in their present families and previous school experiences. The quality of life in families and our workplaces depend on the development of these skills and the ethic of caring.

References

Aburdene, P., & Naisbitt, J. (1992) *Megatrends for women.* New York: Willard Books.

Bolin, F. S. (1990). *Growing up caring.* Mission Hills, CA: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1990). Discovering what families do. In D. Blankenhorn, S. Bayme, & J. Bethke (Eds.), *Rebuilding the nest: A new commitment to the American Family* (pp. 27-38). Milwaukee: Family Service American Publications.

Carnevale, A. P., Gainer, L. J., & Meltzer, A. S. (1990). *Workplace basics: The essential skills employers want.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Csikiszentmihaly, M., & McCormack, J. (1986, February). The influence of teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan,* February 1986, p. 417.

Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Holubec, E. J. (1990). *Circles of learning: Cooperation in the classroom.* 3rd ed. Edina, MN: Interaction Books.

McGovern, M. A. (1990). Sensitivity and reciprocity in the play of adolescent mothers and young fathers with their infants. *Family Relations, 39,* 427-431.

Naisbitt, J. (1982). *Megatrends: Ten new directions transforming our lives.* New York: Warner Books.

Noddings, N. (1988). An Ethic of caring and its implications for instructional arrangements. *American Journal of Education, 96*:(2), 215-230.

Noddings, N. (1988). Caring and interpersonal reasoning. Presentation at the Second International Conference on Thinking and Problem Solving at The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Noddings, N. (1984). *Caring: A feminist approach to ethics and moral education.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Portnoy, R. A. (1986). *Leadership: What every leader should know about people.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Roper Organization. (1987). American Chicle Youth Poll. Morris Plains, NJ: American Chicle Group of Warner-Lambert.

Rubenstein, C. (1988, May 12). The struggle to keep family time quality time. *New York Times,* p. C1.

Sommers, T., & Shields, L. (1988). *Women take care.* Gainsville, FL: Triad.

Thomas, R. (1992a). *Strengthening parent-child relationships: A reflective dialogue approach to parent education.* St. Paul, MN: University of Minnesota.

Thomas, R. (1992b). *Teaching for transfer.* Berkeley, CA: National Center for Research in Vocational Education.

Waerness, K. (1984). *The rationality of caring. Economic and Industrial Democracy, 5*:(2), 134.

Westlake, H., & Westlake, D. G. (1992). *Relationships and family living.* St. Paul, MN: EMC Publishing.

Learning Activities

1. Caring, respectful relationships

a. Visualize a relationship that illustrates caring and respect. Write down specific behaviors or characteristics of that relationship that indicate why it is an example of caring and respect. In pairs, share your findings and create a T-chart with two columns, one labeled "Caring looks like" and the other labeled "Caring sounds like." Share your responses with the class. Use a dictionary to research the definitions of *caring* and *respect*. Explain how the characteristics and behaviors you have identified illustrate these definitions.

Discussion Questions

- *Why are these two qualities important to family relationships? To school relationships? To community relationships? To work relationships?*
- *What would it be like if you were unable to experience these types of relationships? What would the world be like if these types of relationships did not exist?*
- *What are the short-term and long-term consequences of caring, respectful relationships?*
- *What are the characteristics of uncaring, disrespectful relationships? What are the consequences of these types of relationships in families? Schools? Workplaces? Communities?*
- *What skills, values, and attitudes do you need to form caring, respectful relationships with others?*

b. In small groups, examine the following examples of behavior and determine those that represent caring, respectful behavior. For those that do not reflect caring, respectful behavior, change the situation to reflect more caring behavior. Share your responses to the situations and explain how your choices reflect the characteristics of caring, respectful behavior.

(1) Mikala knows that she and her parents have agreed that she will not visit a friend's home unless a parent or another adult is there. After a meeting at school one evening, she goes over to her boyfriend's home knowing that neither of his parents is home. Mikala believes that what her parents don't know can't hurt them.

(2) Robert's mother and father are divorced and live in different cities. Robert lives with his father, but lately he and his father have been fighting over everything, including Robert's responsibilities around the house and the friends Robert chooses. Robert hates fighting, so he has decided to live with his mother for a while.

(3) Shana found out that her younger sister has been spreading rumors about her behind her back. Shana went home, found her sister, and beat her up.

(4) Kyle's mother has asked him to be at his brother's birthday celebration. A few of Kyle's friends ask him to go to a big concert and he decides to go, knowing he will miss the birthday party.

(5) Craig has two teenage sons. The older of the two sons is constantly putting the younger one down with insults and verbal abuse. Craig is aware of the problem and is bothered by the way the younger son has withdrawn and spends time in his room to avoid his brother. But Craig feels strongly that he should not interfere in his sons' relationship. He does his best to ignore the situation and says nothing about it.

(6) Ruth suspects that her son may be involved in some trouble. She has found money missing from her purse, has noticed he is coming in much later at night, and is having trouble talking with him because he ignores her. When she finds out he is skipping school, Ruth tries to talk with him, but he assures her nothing is wrong and he will try to do better. One weekend, he does not come home all night. By morning, she decides to call the police and report him as missing.

Discussion Questions

- *What are the consequences of the behavior of each family member in the above case studies?*
- *Why is it important to consider caring, respectful behavior when making choices affecting the family?*
- *How do your choices affect others in your family?*
- *How can your choices influence your ability to form caring, respectful relationships with others?*

c. In small groups, describe a high school in which a high value is placed on respect and caring. Then describe a high school in which a low value is placed on respect and caring. Make a list of guidelines for building caring, respectful relationships in your Family Relations class. Share your list with the class and choose those guidelines that are most important. Post the guidelines in class.

Discussion Questions

- *What would happen if you chose not to behave in caring, respectful ways in your Family Relations class?*
- *What skills do you have that will help you follow these guidelines?*
- *What goals do you have with regard to building these types of relationships in your Family Relations class?*
- *How are these guidelines similar to or different from guidelines for caring, respectful relationships in families?*

d. With the help of your teacher, form Family Relations Research Teams. Your team will serve as your base group for cooperative learning activities throughout the course. Select a name for your team and make a poster illustrating the name of your team and the interests and talents of team members. Display the poster near the area in which your team will routinely work.

Discussion Questions

- *What are the advantages of working in teams as you study and learn about family issues?*
- *What skills will you need to be an effective team member?*
- *What are the consequences for team members accepting responsibility for the success of the team? Not accepting responsibility for the success of the team?*
- *How is the Family Relations Research Team like a family?*
- *How could the skills you will develop as a team member be used in other groups? With family? In the community?*

Teacher Note: Use **Teacher Guidelines for Family Relations Research Teams** (p. 53) for suggestions as to how to establish these teams.

e. Write an entry in your reflection notebook explaining your goals as a member of a Family Relations Research Team and the role your participation in the team will play in helping you develop knowledge and skills to build strong families. Use the questions below to guide your journal entry.

(1) What are my goals as a member of a Family Relations Research Team?
(2) What skills do I have to contribute to the team?
(3) What skills do I want to continue to develop to be an effective team member?
(4) What responsibilities will I have in the team that are like the responsibilities I might have as a family member? What responsibilities are different from those I might have as a family member?
(5) What can I learn in my Family Relations Research Team that will help me build strong families?

f. **Action Project:** Interview members from several families representing several generations to determine ways that caring and respect are demonstrated in family relationships. If possible, videotape the interviews, take pictures of the families, and/or attend special family celebrations. Write a summary of your findings or present them to the class in an oral report.

g. **FHA/HERO:** Plan and conduct a family picnic to recognize and celebrate caring and respectful relationships among chapter members and their families. Invite family members and create displays of family photographs, mementos, and videotapes. Ask families to prepare a special family food to share with others in a potluck meal. Organize a panel of family members to share special family celebrations. Make favors for family members and thank them for providing the caring, respectful relationships that build strong families.

2. Constructive expression of feelings, needs, and ideas

a. Read **Checking Up on Communication Skills** (p. 54). Define unfamiliar terms. Identify the consequences of using each of the skills and what each contributes to effective communication. Explain how each of these skills contributes to fostering caring, respectful relationships in your Family Relations class.

Discussion Questions

- *Why is effective communication important to your Family Relations class? To families? To communities? In the workplace?*
- *Which skills identified on the effective communication list have you practiced in real-life settings?*
- *Which skills would you like to improve?*

b. Identify roles that could be assigned to each team member when completing assignments, such as those listed below. Discuss a fair way to assign responsibilities to one of the roles. During the discussion, the teacher will use **Checking Up on Communication Skills** (p. 54) to note effective communication behaviors being used during the discussion. Present your decisions regarding the responsibilities to the class and get feedback from your teacher about the effectiveness of communication skills in your group.

(1) Leader
(2) Recorder
(3) Checker
(4) Reporter

Discussion Questions

- *Which communication skill did your group use most often? Why?*
- *Can you give an example of an I-message used by any member of your group during the discussion?*
- *How did you feel when your group was communicating effectively?*
- *Did your group face any difficulties in communicating? Why or why not?*
- *Which skills will you need to continue to improve to communicate effectively as a team?*

c. **Action Project:** Identify a group you are involved in on a regular basis. This could be a school group, your family, or a community group. Write several examples of communication situations you have experienced recently in that group and explain how these situations illustrate or do not illustrate good communication in groups. Set a goal for yourself to improve a specific communication skill in that group setting. Keep a journal of your progress in using the skill and evaluate your progress at the end of the project.

3. Conflict management

a. Write the following question on the chalkboard: "How should we go about resolving conflict in our Family Relations class?" As a class, list possible goals or desired ends with regard to this problem, such as those listed below.

(1) Form caring, respectful relationships with class members.
(2) Create a positive learning environment.
(3) Learn skills that can be transferred to real-life settings, such as families and other school and community groups.

b. Complete **What is Your Conflict Style?** (p. 55). Explain the consequences of using each of these different conflict styles when resolving conflicts in your Family Relations Class.

Discussion Questions
- *Why is it important to learn how to manage conflict?*
- *What goals do you have for managing conflict in your Family Relations class? Your family? With your friends?*
- *What are the consequences of managing conflict in positive ways?*

c. Read **Resolving an Issue** (p. 56). In Family Relations Research Teams, choose one of the situations below and discuss how that conflict would be resolved if you used the negotiation process described on the handout. Present your solution to the class in a role-play.

(1) One of the members of your team is not doing his assigned responsibilities. For several assignments, the rest of the team has been covering for him and doing the work for him, but now the team is feeling like they are being used. The rest of you are earning good grades for him.
(2) Your team has been assigned a project to research family life in another culture. Several members of the team want to do a culture for which there are very few resources in the school library and it would mean a trip to the city library and other places. You think this is too much work and want to persuade them to choose a culture for which there are more resources.

(3) You are working on a cooperative project with your team, and another member of the team seems to be copying your work, rather than contributing her own. You are furious!

(4) One member of your team enjoys being the leader, but wants to do everything himself, without involving the other members of the team. You and the other members feel this is unfair.

(5) You and your team had a huge argument about a project you are working on. Everyone left the class that day mad and a little hurt. The next day, the team faces each other and knows they have to work together to complete the project, but no one is talking to anyone else.

(6) One of the team members has been absent four out of the last five days. Your group has continued with the project and done the work that would have been assigned to him. He would like to make up the work, even though your team is ready to turn in the project. Your teacher has asked that you come up with a fair way to assign him responsibilities related to the project that he can do on his own. He feels that the project is already done, so his work would be meaningless.

Discussion Questions

- *What are the advantages of using this process when resolving conflict?*
- *Is this process a good one to use when resolving conflict with your team? Why or why not?*
- *Should you use this process when resolving conflict in a family? Why or why not?*
- *Are there times when it would not be right to compromise in a conflict situation? Why or why not?*
- *What skills do you need to resolve conflicts in this way?*
- *What personal, school, and community resources are available to help you learn conflict resolution skills?*

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Write a paragraph identifying the significance of caring, respectful relationships. Include a definition of caring and respectful behavior toward others and at least three reasons why caring, respectful relationships are important to individuals, families, and society.

2. Given case studies involving ineffective communication, suggest ways to make the communication more effective.

3. Given situations involving relationships with others, suggest ways to express personal feelings, needs, and ideas constructively.

4. Given situations involving conflict, suggest ways to resolve the conflict in ways that are best for self and others.

Classroom Experiences

1. In small groups, examine examples of behavior and determine those situations that represent caring, respectful behavior. For those that do not reflect caring, respectful behavior, change the situation to reflect more caring behavior.

2. In teams, choose a situation and discuss how that conflict would be resolved if you used a conflict negotiation process. Present your solution to the class in a role-play.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Interview members from several families representing several generations to determine ways that caring and respect are demonstrated in family relationships. If possible, videotape the interviews, take pictures of the families, and/or attend special family celebrations. Write a summary of your findings or present them to the class in an oral report.

2. Identify a group you are involved in on a regular basis. Write several examples of communication situations you have experienced recently in that group and explain how these situations illustrate or do not illustrate good communication in groups. Set a goal for yourself to improve a specific communication skill in that group setting. Keep a journal of your progress in using the skill and evaluate your progress at the end of the project.

Teacher Guidelines for Family Relations Research Teams

An important goal of the Family Relations class is to help students develop skill in working cooperatively within groups. Skills such as communicating, resolving conflict, setting and working toward group goals, and fostering group cooperation can be learned and practiced in cooperative learning groups during the course. These skills, once developed, can help students develop strong families and strong communities.

To develop these skills, students need practical situations to use these skills in promoting positive interaction and encouraging individual and group decision making. An FHA/HERO chapter, established as part of the class, can provide an excellent opportunity for small group interaction. In addition, Family Relations Research Teams can serve as base groups for cooperative learning assignments throughout the semester.

These teams are long-term base groups that can create a simulated family environment. The teams provide the following:

1. Assistance, support, and encouragement for mastering the course content and skills and feedback on how well the content and skills are being learned.
2. Assistance, support, and encouragement for thinking critically about the course content, explaining precisely what one learns, engaging in intellectual controversy, getting the work done on time, and applying what is learned to one's own life.
3. A set of interpersonal relationships to personalize the course and an arena for trying out the cooperative learning procedures and skills emphasized within the course.
4. A structure for managing course evaluation.

Teams can be used for cooperative learning activities such as solving practical problems that occur within families, researching family issues, or developing Action Projects or FHA/HERO community service projects.

Teams can be selected in a variety of ways but should be assigned by the teacher. Assigning teams eliminates friends being with friends and promotes interaction with new learners. The more diverse the groups are in terms of learning styles, leadership qualities, thinking skills, and student background, the richer the environment will be for group interaction and, ultimately, for meaningful learning.

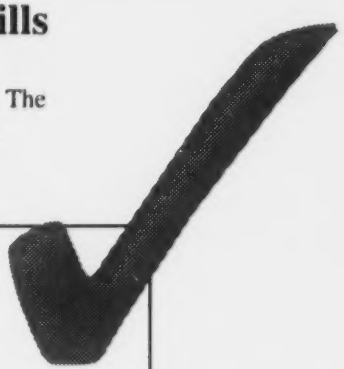
If the local school environment allows, form the teams into simulated family groups. Place learners into the following simulated families: single-parent, dual parent, married without children, extended, and blended. The number of children in each simulated family can vary as necessary. Once teams have been given a specific type of family, allow the team members to create the dynamics of their family situation such as names, residence, ages, roles, occupations, and special concerns (unemployment, physical handicaps, etc.). Arrange the classroom so that family teams can sit together. Try to assign students to teams different than their real-life families. Examples: assign learners from single parent families to families with dual parents, only-child learners to families with children, etc. This will provide learners with the opportunity to develop empathy and understanding for families different from their own.

In order for cooperative teams to be successful, it is important to teach and reinforce group processes. The purpose of the Relating to Others Process Module and the Assuming a Leadership Role Process Module is to directly teach important skills for group interaction: communication, conflict management, cooperation, and leadership. The learning activities in these modules are designed to develop these concepts and to establish the Family Relations Research Teams for the remainder of the course. As the teams complete assignments and projects, reinforce the use of group skills. Provide feedback to students using **Checking Up on Communication Skills** (p. 54) or **Assessing Team Cooperation** (p. 68). Team members should periodically be asked to assess themselves using these same instruments.

In the event that a team member is absent from class on a regular basis, allow the team members to determine how to complete the assignment and identify make-up work. This is a good opportunity to help team members be responsible for the group and to use problem-solving or conflict-resolution skills.

Checking Up On Communication Skills

Communication involves both sending and receiving messages. The items on the checklist below contribute to clear communication.



When Sending Messages . . .

_____ Choose a time and place that will enhance the communication.

_____ Consider the perspective of the receiver when phrasing your message.

_____ Accurately describe your ideas, perceptions, feelings, and needs without implying judgment.
"I feel . . ." "I want . . ." "In my view . . ."

_____ Make your verbal and nonverbal messages match. Consider—
- Eye contact
- Gestures
- Voice tone
- Posture
- Facial expressions

To Receive Messages . . .

Focus:

_____ Be attentive and show interest with nonverbal messages. Consider—
- Eye contact
- Gestures
- Posture
- Facial expressions

_____ Listen without interrupting.

_____ Control or ignore distractions.

Acknowledge:

_____ Make brief comments to show interest, such as— "I see." "Uh-huh."

_____ Reflect or restate the message to clarify the sender's message without making judgment.
- Repeat what you hear in your own words.
- Recognize the sender's feelings such as, "I understand you are upset," or "I appreciate how you feel."
- Repeat exact phrases

Clarify:

_____ Draw out additional information to improve your understanding.
"Tell me more . . ." "Do you mean that . . .?"
"I'm not sure I understand" "Are you feeling . . .?"
"Would you like to talk about it?" "Let's discuss it further."

What is Your Conflict Style?

Directions: Place a checkmark in the box that indicates how often you handle conflict in the way described in each statement.

	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1. Avoid the person or situation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
2. Change the subject	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
3. Joke about the conflict	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
4. Apologize	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
5. Give in and keep bad feelings about it to yourself	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
6. Try to understand the other person's point of view and consider changing your mind	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
7. Ask somebody who isn't involved to help everyone involved make a final decision	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
8. Reach a compromise	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
9. Pretend to agree but do what you want later	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
10. Argue over the issues	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
11. Get angry and scream or fight	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
12. Pretend there isn't really a problem	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
13. Argue over something else less important	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
14. Act in ways that hide how you feel	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
15. Completely take on the other person's view as if it were your own	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
16. Make excuses for not dealing with the conflict	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
17. Agree with the other person not to deal with the conflict	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
18. Talk with the other person and arrive at a resolution	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
19. Allow someone else to decide how the conflict will be resolved	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
20. Harm someone or something	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Based on your responses, decide which of the conflict styles listed below best describes how you handle conflict.

Avoidance. This response reflects the attitude that since conflict is bad and disruptive, those who desire to be seen as good should avoid it. More subtle ways of avoiding conflict are denial, in which angry or hurt feelings are repressed instead of expressed, and accommodation, when opponents smooth over a potential conflict by apologizing, making excuses, or adapting their behavior to fit the other person's. Avoidance is represented in items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19.

Aggression. The aggressive response reflects the belief that in every conflict, there must be a winner and a loser. Confronters are happy to hurl insults or threats. People whose conflict style is confrontational often base their threats on the authority or sense of power they consider rightfully theirs. Aggression is represented in items 10, 11, 13, 20.

Problem solving. Advocates of this response see conflict as something that happens in the natural scheme of human relationships. Their concern is to arrive at a solution that both parties can live with. Problem solvers frequently use compromise (in which each party gives up what is less important in order to keep what is most important) or collaboration (in which the disputants work together to explore the means by which the needs of both can be met, in a "win-win" solution). Problem solving is represented in items 6, 7, 8, 18.

Adapted from F. S. Bolin, W. E. Bolin, E. Eubanks, G. C. Flynn, H. J. Kramer, and C. Scruggs. *Growing Up Caring Teacher's Resource Binder*, Mission Hills, CA: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 1990.

Resolving an Issue

Resolving as issue in a way that is best for all parties involves a combination of good communication skills and good problem-solving skills. The steps identified below can help you work toward resolving conflicts in ways that strengthen relationships because they involve acting in caring, respectful ways.

Step 1 Show a genuine interest in resolving the issue. Choose a place to talk where you will be free from interruptions. State your goal to resolve the issue fairly for all involved. As you go through the process, focus on the problem, rather than making personal comments about the people involved.

Step 2 Take turns stating your positions, interests, and feelings clearly. When others are speaking, listen actively without interrupting. Ask questions to clarify the perspectives of others. Restate messages from others to clarify what has been said. When all parties feel they have had the opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts, you are ready for the next step.

Step 3 Make a list of possible solutions. Listen with an open mind and try not to judge any possible choices.

Step 4 Choose a solution that is best for all involved. Make a note beside those solutions that are acceptable to more than one party. It may be necessary to integrate different ideas into a single solution that may be more agreeable to all.

Step 5 Make a plan of action. Identify each party's role in carrying out the solution. Question others to make sure that they understand their role.

Step 6 Set a time to talk later and review your progress.

Some behaviors can make it difficult to use the win-win process and serve as a barrier to reaching an agreement. Behaviors to avoid include

- Blaming
- Making insults
- Putting others down
- Interrupting
- Being sarcastic
- Refusing to listen
- Making threats
- Making excuses
- Changing the subject

Family Relations

Assuming a Leadership Role

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about assuming a leadership role?

Process Competency 0.0.4: Assume a leadership role as a responsible family member and citizen

Competency Builders:

0.0.4.1	Identify ways to be a responsible citizen at home, at school, at work, and in community settings
0.0.4.2	Evaluate societal conditions affecting personal, family, and community well-being*
0.0.4.3	Describe visions and goals for families, student organizations, and work groups
0.0.4.4	Evaluate consequences of cooperative and uncooperative actions
0.0.4.5	Cooperate with others to achieve group goals
0.0.4.6	Use planning processes to establish and achieve individual and group goals

*This competency is addressed in Content Module 8, Analyzing Social Forces Affecting Families.

Supporting Concepts:

1. Cooperation
2. Leadership and citizenship
3. Planning process
4. Societal issues affecting families

Teacher Note: Since the four process competencies of managing work and family responsibilities, solving personal and family problems, relating to others, and assuming a leadership role represent skills essential to strong families, the four process modules introducing these skills should be taught at the beginning of the Family Relations course. This module introduces the concept of cooperation and leadership, as well as the planning of Action Projects. Refer to **Overview of the Family Relations Resource Guide Process Modules** (p. 3) to determine the focus of each process module.

Since the content of the process competencies remains relatively unchanged over the six core course areas of the Work and Family Life program, the teacher background information is the same as that printed in previous guides. The learning activities, however, have been designed specifically for this course area and complement the content modules found in the rest of the guide.

Assuming a Leadership Role

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

Leaders are needed wherever there are groups of people. Empowering leaders, rather than authoritarian leaders, are especially needed in our complex, changing global age. Authoritarian leaders have power over people, but empowering leaders help people shape their own vision and goals and work toward achieving those goals. Leadership must be developed in families and other groups with real issues and concerns. Historically, many people believed that leaders were born, not made, and that great leaders were discovered, not developed. However, there is now "consensus among social scientists that leadership skills and competencies are not inherited from one's ancestors, that they do not magically appear when a person is assigned to a leadership position" (Johnson & Johnson, 1987, p. 119).

Leadership development is ultimately self-development, and can be enhanced in a variety of settings. Teachers, employers, and other leaders who have high expectations and support the self-development of those they lead can help others develop confidence in their ability to lead and make a difference. Parents, however, are perhaps the most influential in developing leadership abilities. One researcher concluded that formal education, mentoring, and other activities in adult life have less influence on the development of leadership ability than parental expectations and values and skills reinforced very early in life (Kouzes & Posner, 1987).

Most young people face the challenge of genuine leadership for the first time in their teenage years. During this important time in their lives, young people need guidance and encouragement to experience the realities and rewards of participatory, shared leadership. Family, educational settings, and student organizations–such as Future Homemakers of America/Home Economics Related Occupations (FHA/HERO) can provide the laboratories for developing the values, beliefs, and skills underlying empowering participatory leadership. Through shared leadership experiences in these settings, young people can discover that they can make a difference in the well-being of those around them.

Background

Our democratic society is made up of many groups: private groups, such as families; and public groups, such as neighborhoods, cities, states, and nations. Within communities are civic, social, educational, professional, and religious organizational groups. The purpose of these groups is to help people meet their needs for love, caring, sharing, giving and receiving, and belonging, and to resolve family or public issues facing group members.

By joining together, group members are more likely to have their needs met than if they try to meet their needs alone. Many human needs, such as loving, caring, sharing, and giving and receiving, can be met only through groups, such as the family or social or religious groups. To resolve issues affecting group members, groups need to (1) complete tasks and (2) maintain effective working relationships between the members.

Assuming a Leadership Role

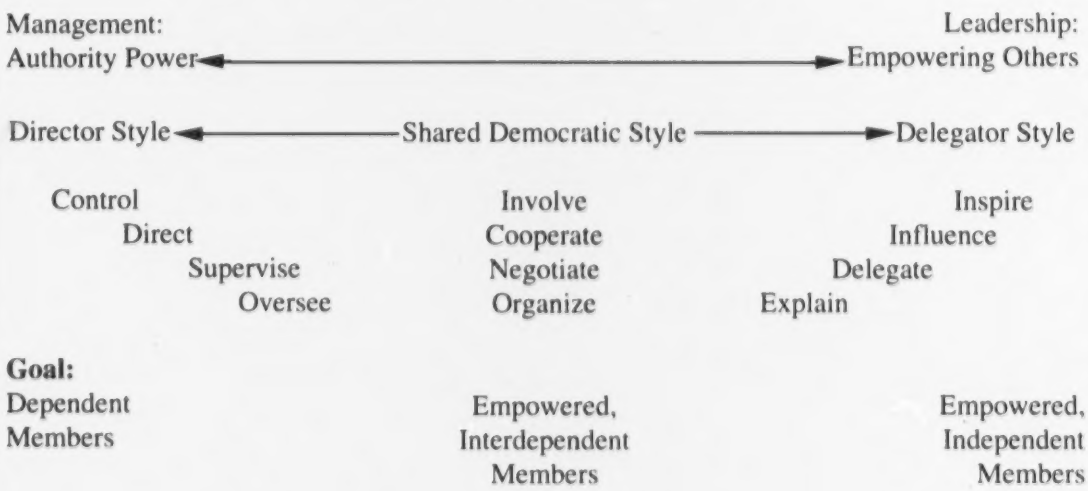
PROCESS MODULE 4

Leadership is the process of helping a group shape a vision of its purpose and goals, and of getting people–both inside and outside the group–to commit and recommit themselves to accomplishing that vision (Woyach, 1991). Effective leadership styles, regardless of the personality or style of the leader, satisfy the group members' needs, achieve their goals, and build the group members' abilities and self-esteem. Leaders who empower others help group members feel confident to act on their own authority–on their own judgment–and support the decisions made, even if the decisions are mistakes. True leaders view mistakes as opportunities for learning rather than as opportunities for humiliation (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992).

Leaders are needed in groups to help group members shape a shared sense of purpose or vision, get things done to meet their needs and goals, and create a cooperative relationship between members. Shared participatory leadership, one of the three leadership styles shown in Figure 1, has been shown to be the most effective in increasing production, innovation, and responsible self-direction and initiative (Peters & Austin, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Johnson & Johnson, 1987). Shared leadership encompasses the following:

1. All group members can and should perform leadership functions appropriate to each person and to group needs. Any member can influence group behavior.
2. The leader of the group encourages other group members to make decisions and initiate action without seeking the leader's approval (Carnevale et al., 1990).

Figure 1
Consequences of Leadership Styles



Assuming a Leadership Role

Strong, healthy families–our smallest democracies–are characterized by interactive shared leadership styles. For instance, healthy families allow all members of the family to be included in family problem solving when they are likely to have an opinion. Such interactive, participatory, shared leadership has been shown to be effective in all types of groups and organizations in increasing the responsible self-direction, initiative, and morale of all group members and the quality of decisions and work (Peters & Austin, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Johnson & Johnson, 1987).

Thus, different members of a group can share leadership by assuming the behaviors needed to lead to the success of the group. For example, in families each spouse may assume behaviors necessary to complete food-preparation or money-management tasks at different times in the family life cycle, and similarly, each may assume nurturing or caring behaviors to maintain collaborative relationships in the family. In social or civic groups, each group member may become a leader by proposing activities to complete a task, or to reduce tensions between other group members.

Responsible citizenship in a democratic society involves individual accountability and action for the common good of the group. Being a responsible family member requires taking action for the common good of the family–not action for the good of individuals in the family to the detriment of another family member or the family as a whole. Similarly, being a responsible citizen requires taking action for the common good of community members. Responsible citizenship begins in families as children learn to care for themselves, family members, pets, their home, and neighborhood.

Responsible citizens are concerned about the well-being of all society members and take social action to meet those needs. Such action can range from providing social services to those in need of mercy and compassion, to working for social justice for those being oppressed, mistreated, or denied their rights. Such social-justice action might take the form of advocating justice in individual cases or working for public policy change. Social action for public policy development, like other responsible citizenship, should bring about change and transformation for the good of citizens in the community, state, nation, or world.

To successfully bring about social change, six principles of social transformation provide guidance for social action (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992). Responsible citizens

1. Use a win-win perspective rather than a win-lose perspective
2. Begin at the grass roots rather than at the top
3. Use what works (and is right) rather than what is "politically correct"
4. Work toward choice rather than from bureaucratic limitations
5. Become advocates rather than victims
6. Invest in entrepreneurs rather than providing government aid

More than ever before, shared democratic leadership is needed in families, workplaces, communities, and government at all levels. Such responsible citizenship will bring about the social action and change that is needed for the common good of our global community.

Assuming a Leadership Role

Vocational student organizations provide a unique program of career and leadership development, motivation, and recognition exclusively for middle and junior high, secondary, postsecondary, adult, and collegiate students enrolled in vocational education programs. The U.S. Department of Education recognizes vocational student organizations as integral to the vocational education program.

FHA/HERO encourages personal growth, leadership development, family and community involvement, and preparation for the multiple adult roles of wage earner, community leader, and family member. Involvement in FHA/HERO offers members the opportunity to expand their leadership potential and develop skills necessary in the home and workplace for life-planning, goal setting, problem solving, decision making, and interpersonal communication.

References

Aburdene, P., & Naisbitt, J. (1992). *Megatrends for women.* New York: Willard Books.

Bennis, W., & Nanus, B. (1985). *Leaders: The strategies for taking charge.* New York: Harper Collins.

Carnevale, A. P., Gainer, L. J., & Meltzer, A. S. (1990). *Workplace basics: The essential skills employers want.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Future Homemakers of America, Inc. (1991). *FHA/HERO chapter Handbook.* Reston, VA: Future Homemakers of America, Inc.

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1987). *Learning together and alone,* 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (1987). *The leadership challenge: How to get extraordinary things done in organizations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Peters, T., & Austin, N. (1985). *A passion for excellence: The leadership difference.* New York: Warner Books.

Woyach, R. B. (1991). *Preparing for leadership: A young adults' guide to leadership skills in a global age,* ISLI ed. Columbus, Ohio: Mershon Center, The Ohio State University.

Assuming a Leadership Role

Learning Activities

1. Cooperation

a. Write a story about a recent experience you had in which you were cooperating in a group to reach a common goal. Your story could focus on a family, school, work, or community group. In pairs, share your stories and identify behaviors described that illustrate cooperation. As a class, develop a definition of *cooperation* and list skills needed to cooperate in a group. Compare your list with those skills identified on **Assessing Team Cooperation** (p. 68). Share your responses.

Discussion Questions

- *What are the consequences of cooperative actions? Uncooperative actions?*
- *Why are cooperative skills important to a family? School? A workplace? Community settings?*
- *What cooperative skills do you possess now? Which would you like to develop further?*

b. Collect examples of good cooperation in families and other groups and post them in the classroom. Examples might include newspaper or magazine articles or written summaries of television programs or literature. As each example is contributed, explain how the situation shows what cooperation can achieve.

> **Teacher Note:** This assignment could be ongoing throughout the Family Relations course. Students could be given rewards or participation points for contributing articles or summaries to the display.

c. **FHA/HERO:** Using classroom resources such as FHA/HERO scrapbooks and materials used in previous classes and FHA/HERO state materials and information, develop your classroom FHA/HERO community by completing the following activities.

(1) Review the FHA/HERO structure. Identify activities and events that you can be involved in at various levels.
(2) Elect FHA/HERO officers for your classroom chapter. Define officer duties to include classroom management activities (for example, the FHA/HERO Secretary can also keep the classroom attendance).
(3) Using Robert's Rules of Order and other FHA/HERO materials, review basic parliamentary procedure. Hold your first chapter meeting using the **Meeting Agenda** (p. 69) as a guide.
(4) Using the Family Relations Research Teams formed in Process Module 3: Relating to Others, establish committees for various topics in the Family

Relations course. Each committee will set goals and plan events and activities for the chapter around that topic. Possible events might include classroom speakers, Star Event participation, school awareness programs, displays or community service projects. The plan for these activities will be developed by participating in further learning activities in this module.

Discussion Questions

- *What skills can you develop as a result of your participation in FHA/HERO?*
- *Why is your FHA/HERO chapter an important part of the Family Relations class?*
- *What skills developed through FHA/HERO participation would also be important in building a strong family?*
- *Why is parliamentary procedure important when making decisions in a large group?*
- *How can the principles of parliamentary procedure be used when making decisions as a family?*

Teacher Note: If your school district or local organizations or businesses in your community are using total quality management (TQM), you may want to implement this process with your FHA/HERO chapter. **Using Total Quality Management** (p. 70) provides an overview of TQM and identifies resources for implementing this management strategy.

d. **Action Project:** Choose a decision-making group in your community such as a school board or city council. Attend one or more meetings of the group and observe the way that the group makes decisions and takes action on community issues. Using your observations, answer the questions below. Make an oral report to the class about your experience.

(1) What issues were before the group? How might those issues affect families in your community?
(2) What solutions were proposed? What were the pros and cons of each solution?
(3) How did the group go about resolving conflict or taking action on issues?
(4) Did the group use parliamentary procedure to resolve conflict? Reach a decision?
(5) Why do you think a group like the one you observed uses parliamentary procedure?
(6) How is the public policy making you observed similar to and/or different from the policy making that occurs within families?

Assuming a Leadership Role

2. Leadership and citizenship

a. In pairs, make a list of specific actions or personal qualities that distinguish responsible citizenship. Choose the five characteristics that are most important for responsible citizenship and share your list of five with the class. Note the similarities and differences between your list and those of other groups. Use resources to research the definitions of the words *responsible* and *citizen* and compare the characteristics you identified with the definitions.

Discussion Questions

- *Why is responsible citizenship important to families? In a school? On the job? In a community?*
- *How does responsible citizenship differ from what would be considered irresponsible citizenship?*
- *What are the consequences of irresponsible citizenship for families? Work settings? Communities?*

b. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a panel of citizens from your community who have taken a leadership role with regard to family relations issues. Possible panel members might include family members committed to community service, professionals from school, work settings, or community organizations involved in family relations issues. Ask the panel members to explain several family relations issues with which they have been involved and to describe what it means to take a leadership role as a citizen in the setting(s) in which they work. In listening teams, choose one of the tasks below and report your findings after the panel presentation.

(1) Identify the leadership characteristics exhibited by the panel. Explain what good leadership is, based on their actions and experiences.
(2) Explain the similarities and differences between being a community leader and being a leader in a family.
(2) Identify family relations issues in which the panel members have been involved. List reasons why taking action on these issues is important to the panelists. Explain the significance of these issues to individuals, families, and the community as a whole.

c. Complete **Being a Leader as a Citizen** (p. 71). Share your responses with the class.

Discussion Questions

- *What is the difference between being a citizen and being a leader as a citizen?*
- *What are the consequences of being a responsible citizen, but not assuming any roles as a leader?*
- *What opportunities have you had to assume a role as a leading citizen?*

- *How can you develop future opportunities to assume a role as a leading citizen?*
- *What barriers might exist to prevent assuming a role as a leading citizen? How could one overcome these barriers?*

d. Complete **Three Styles of Family Leadership** (p. 72). Read **Shared Leadership for Family, Work, and Community Life** (p. 73). Explain ways that shared leadership can be used in a family and in your FHA/HERO chapter. Write a journal entry reflecting on this activity using the questions below.

(1) Which style of leadership should be used in families? In your FHA/HERO chapter? Why?
(2) What are the consequences of using this type of leadership?
(3) What skills, values, and attitudes do people need to practice this style of leadership in families and other groups?

Discussion Questions
- *Why are leaders important to groups?*
- *Does it make a difference what type of leadership style is used?*
- *What personal qualities are important to leadership?*
- *In what settings is leadership important?*

e. **Action Project:** Choose a leader in the workplace, the community, or in an organization related to family relations issues. Follow the leader as he or she performs duties related to their leadership role. Interview the leader to determine how he or she became a leader. Reflect on the leadership skills you observe by writing a report that addresses the questions below.

(1) How did the person you shadowed illustrate leadership?
(2) What influenced this person to become a leader?
(3) What leadership skills were used?
(4) What challenging leadership situations did this leader face?
(5) What skills did you observe being used that you possess?
(6) What skills did you observe that could be used in other settings?

3. Planning process

a. **FHA/HERO:** Using resources, identify the stages of the FHA/HERO Planning Process. In Family Relations Research Teams, use the process to develop a plan for your activities and projects related to the goals you established in Activity 1b. Present your plan to the chapter.

Discussion Questions
- *How did the planning process assist you in working together to take action as a group?*

- *How could using the planning process make accomplishing a group task easier?*
- *How could you use the planning process at home? In a work setting? In a community setting?*

b. **Action Project:** Read **Introducing Action Projects** (p. 74). On a poster, make a concept map by drawing a circle and labeling it "Reasons Why Action Projects are an Important Part of Family Relations Class." Draw lines outward from the circle with each representing a reason Action Projects are important. Display in the classroom. Use the planning process to plan your Action Project. Use ideas from the FHA/HERO Power of One Family Ties Project as well as ideas identified throughout the various modules in this Resource Guide.

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Identify at least three ways to be a responsible citizen in each of the following settings: at home, at school, at work, and in the community.

2. Given case studies of families, student organizations, and work groups, describe the visions and goals of each group.

3. Given examples of cooperative and uncooperative actions, identify the consequences of each action for those involved.

4. Without the aid of references, identify at least five behaviors that can be used to cooperate with others to achieve group goals.

5. Given a case study, use the planning process to achieve individual and group goals.

Classroom Experiences

1. Write a story about a recent experience you had in which you were cooperating in a group to reach a common goal.

2. In cooperative learning groups, set a goal related to a family relations topic and design a plan of activities and projects related to that goal.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Choose a decision-making group in your community such as a school board or city council. Attend one or more meetings of the group and observe the way that the group makes decisions and takes action on community issues. Make an oral report to the class about your experience.

2. Choose a leader in the workplace, the community, or in an organization related to family relations issues. Follow the leader as he or she performs duties related to their leadership role. Reflect on the leadership skills you observe by writing a report that summarizes your observations about leadership.

3. In cooperative learning groups, develop a plan of community service activities and projects related to a family relations issue.

Assessing Team Cooperation

Good cooperation means working to form good relationships with other group members as well as achieving group goals. You can use the items below to assess how well a group cooperates, or you can use it to assess your own actions as a member of a group. Circle the rating for each skill according to the following scale:

3 = Consistently perform this skill **2 = Occasionally perform this skill** **1 = Rarely perform this skill**

Skills to form good working relationships with others

1. Listen to others' ideas, opinions, and feelings	3	2	1
2. Encourage others and compliment contributions	3	2	1
3. Support others in their efforts to contribute to the group	3	2	1
4. Ask questions when you do not understand something	3	2	1
5. Give feedback to others	3	2	1
6. Contribute ideas, opinions, and feelings	3	2	1
7. Assist in reaching group consensus	3	2	1
8. Recognize and deal with communication barriers	3	2	1

To work to achieve group goals

9. Assist in identifying group goals	3	2	1
10. Assist in planning to organize the group activities	3	2	1
11. Complete responsibilities assigned to you	3	2	1
12. Share materials with others	3	2	1
13. Identify and resolve problems promptly	3	2	1
14. Use techniques such as consensus and compromise to resolve problems fairly	3	2	1
15. Give feedback about group progress and results	3	2	1

Based on the above responses, on a scale of 1 to 10 with ten being the most cooperative and 1 being the least cooperative, how would you rate your group? _____

How would you rate yourself as a group member?_____

Reflection Questions

- *What are your strengths in the area of cooperative skills?*
- *What are your strengths as a group?*
- *What cooperative skills do you need to improve? Why?*
- *What actions should you take to improve your cooperative skills?*

Meeting Agenda

The following meeting agenda can help you organize your FHA/HERO Meetings.

Agenda Item	Person Responsible
Opening Ceremony and Call to Order	President
Roll Call	Secretary
Reading and Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting	Secretary
Officer Report	President —Special Things Done Vice-President — Future Programs Secretary — Correspondence Treasurer — Approval or corrected Treasurer's Report— report filed
Report of the Committees	
Standing or all-year committees	Committee chairman gives report to Secretary
Special or one-time committees	Committee chairman gives report to Secretary
Unfinished Business	Secretary reminds from the minutes

Item	Motion	Second	Vote

New Business ..... Any Member

Item	Motion	Second	Vote

Announcements ..... President

Program ..... Vice President

Closing Ceremony and Adjournment ..... President

Using Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management (TQM) can be used as a tool to help an FHA/HERO chapter work together to solve problems, elect officers, establish committees, and create plans for chapter activities. Through TQM a chapter can

- clearly define its purpose or vision
- identify specific outcomes
- demonstrate commitment to quality
- determine quality standards and requirements
- encourage total member involvement and teamwork
- make continuous improvement

As you organize your FHA/HERO chapter, consider one or more of the following TQM activities:

Elections

- Use a flowchart to diagram and provide a pictorial view of the election progress.
- Brainstorm ideas on what makes a good officer.
- Create an Affinity Diagram to identify officer duties. The group brainstorms officer duties then arranges and rearranges the duties to match the various officer categories.
- Use Force Field Analysis to identify the driving and constraining forces in becoming an officer. A large sheet of paper is divided in half and members list the drivers on the left side and the restrainers on the right side before analyzing the forces affecting becoming an officer.

Committees

- Brainstorm why committees are needed.
- Use the Crawford Slip Method to allow chapter members to choose a committee on which to work. The Crawford Slip Method involves everyone writing their ideas about a specific subject, one at a time, on a single sentence on a separate slip of paper. All slips are collected and classified and the results edited into a final form.

Chapter Program of Work

- Conduct a Buzz Session to generate ideas for chapter activities.
- Use Nominal Group Technique to prioritize activities for a calendar of events that involves all students in the decision-making process. Brainstorm all ideas, then select about half of them for prioritization. Rank the most significant. Repeat the ranking procedure until you have ranked the top five activities for a calendar of events.

These are just a few ideas for incorporating TQM into your FHA/HERO chapter. The following references can provide further information.

Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA). *Total Quality Curriculum.* Leesburg, VA: VICA, 1993. (Available from National VICA, Education Department, P. O. Box 3000, Leesburg, VA 22075).

Bonstingl, J. J. *Schools of Quality: An Introduction to Total Quality Management in Education.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1992.

Deming, W. E. *Out of Crisis.* Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1989.

Neuroth J., Plastrick P., and Cleveland, J. *Total Quality Management Handbook.* Lansing, MI: On Purpose Associates, 1992.

Being a Leader as a Citizen

Complete the items below.

1. My definition of ***leadership*** is

2. Being a leader

in a ***family*** means	at ***school or work*** means	in the ***community*** means

3. The ***skills*** needed for leadership are

   These skills are important because

4. The ***values*** needed for leadership are

   These values are important because

5. A ***responsible citizen*** fulfills certain responsibilities in ways that are best for self and others. ***Being a leader as a citizen*** means going beyond fulfilling responsibilities to lead others to action or change that impacts others in the group in a positive way. For instance, being a responsible citizen in a family might mean caring for young children. Being a leader as a citizen in a family might mean recognizing the need to support legislation that promotes the well being of children and organizing other families to inform legislators about that need. Using the space below and the back of this page, list examples of citizenship behaviors and leading behaviors in family, school, work, and community settings.

Being a Citizen	*Being a Leader as a Citizen*

Three Styles of Family Leadership

Leadership is important in families. With effective leadership, a family can satisfy the needs of family members, achieve family goals, and build the family members' abilities and self-esteem. There are several styles of leadership, each having different goals and outcomes.

- The **director** style uses authority and power to control, direct, supervise, and oversee family members. Having family members depend on the family leader is the goal of this style.
- The **shared democratic** style of leadership has as its goal empowered, interdependent members. This type of leader involves other family members in making decisions, fosters cooperation, and negotiates differences.
- The **delegator** style of leadership influences members by explaining and delegating what is to be done. The goal is for family members to be independent.

Read the case studies below and answer the reflection questions to determine the consequences of various styles of leadership in families.

Case Study 1: Director Style

The Stevens are an extended family since Grandma Davis, Mrs. Stevens' mother, has moved in with them. Grandma has become very controlling with the household. She directs family members in what to do and how to do it. Mrs. Stevens is worried about talking with her mother because she doesn't want to hurt her.

Reflective Dialogue Questions

What is happening here?
How do you think Grandma feels? Why?
How do you think Mrs. Stevens feels? Why?
How might the other family members feel? Why?
What action would you recommend?
What would be the consequences of that action?
How do Grandma's actions illustrate the director style of leadership?
What are the consequences of this leadership style?

Case Study 2: Shared Democratic Style

Mr. Winter is a single father raising his daughters Alicia, 14, and Jennifer, 10. Mr. Winter and his two daughters have always been very close and make many of their decisions together. They hold family meetings and allow each family member to contribute to the discussion of problems. Mr. Winter is usually willing to negotiate with his daughters. Recently, he noticed Alicia has been very angry and withdrawn. She's been very mean to her younger sister. He's very worried about her and wants to help her.

What is happening here?
What action would you recommend?
What would be the consequences of that action?
How do Mr. Winter's actions illustrate the shared democratic style of leadership?
What are the consequences of this style?
How can you tell?
How can Mr. Winter help his family?

Case Study 3: Delegator Style

Tom and Janet Jefferson have been married almost twenty years. They have three children David, 9, Karen, 10, and Michael, 18. Janet has worked part-time off and on during the last twenty years, but recently she has started working full-time to help pay for Michael's college expenses. Since she's working, she's delegated many of the household tasks to Karen, including making dinner and taking care of David. Karen is getting very annoyed with her extra duties, and feels like she is doing all the work herself. She also knows her mother is sacrificing quite a bit.

What is happening here?
What are some of the goals in this family?
How is Karen feeling?
How is Janet feeling?
How might Michael feel?
What type of leadership style does Janet show?
What might be the consequences of this style?

Shared Leadership

For Family, Work, and Community Life

Leadership is the process of helping a group shape its vision and goals and working to accomplish them. Shared leadership means that all group members can contribute leadership skills to the group and that leaders in the group encourage everyone to help make decisions and to take action. The chart below shows the values, beliefs, and skills important to shared leadership.

The Heart: ⟶ *Values*	**The Head:** ⟶ *Thoughts or Beliefs*	**The Hand:** ⟶ *Skills for Doing*	**The Results:** *Empowerment of Others*
• Good Work: Excellent quality; individual accountability, dedication, and commitment	• Ownership: Everyone in an organization is responsible for its success.	• Helping groups make decisions	• People feel significant.
• Caring/Loving: Concern for the welfare of others	Interdependence: Everyone is connected by providing support for others.	• Empathizing and learning to understand other people	• People make positive contributions.
• Justice: Equal treatment and respect for integrity of all individuals	• Golden Rule: Take care of people, and those you serve will take care of you.	• Building confidence in others	• Organization achieves its goals.
• Best consequences: Actions benefit, not harm, all who are or will be affected by short-term and long-term effects	• Thinking: Practical problem solving, planning, goal setting, and learning are needed for group success.	• Communicating with others	• People are dedicated, caring, and innovative.
		• Resolving conflict	• People feel a part of the group and want to make it a success.
		• Motivating members	
		• Building a coalition of outside support	
		• Being an advocate for the group	

Introducing Action Projects

Action Projects are opportunities for you to apply what you have learned in Family Relations class to real-life settings—in other words, to put what you have learned into ACTION. You will choose your own Action Project based on your interest and needs.

The first step in completing an Action Project is to plan the project. You may seek the help of parents, classmates, teachers, and community members as you plan the project, depending on the direction of your project. Begin your planning by identifying a practical problem on which you would like to take action. The problem must be related to Family Relations topics. Some sample problems are identified below. Additional examples of Action Projects will be given throughout the Family Relations course.

Practical Problem Related to Family Relations Topic	**Possible Action**
How should I go about meeting the needs of families in the community?	Volunteer at a community agency that serves the needs of families.
What should I do about building a strong family?	Plan and conduct activities to strengthen your family relationships.
What should I do about developing family communication skills?	Develop a goal to improve your interaction with family members. Keep a journal of your progress.

Student Responsibilities for Action Projects

1. The project must take a minimum of 15 hours of time to complete. You may choose one practical problem as your focus or a combination of two or three depending on your interests and needs.
2. The project must be completed and all work turned in by _____ _____.
3. Ask for help when needed.
4. If you need to make changes in your original plan for the project, discuss these changes with your teacher and your parent or adult mentor.
5. Complete the **Action Project Planning Form** (p. 75) and the **Action Project Assessment Form** (p. 76).
6. Keep parent or adult mentor and your teacher informed about your project.
7. Present the results of your project in a five minute presentation to the class.

Teacher Responsibilities for Action Projects

1. Meet with each student to plan the project and check progress.
2. Be available to visit the project site if needed for hold progress conference with the responsible adult.
3. Suggest helpful resources when needed.
4. Assist the student in evaluating the Action Project.
5. Keep parent or adult mentor informed of progress.

Parent or Adult Mentor Responsibilities

1. Meet with the student to plan the project. Sign the completed Action Project Planning Form.
2. Suggest resources when needed.
3. Check progress of project.
4. Assist in evaluating the completed project.

Action Project Planning Form

Name _____

Grade _____ School Year _____

Course _____

Project Time line:

- Initial Conference with Teacher _____
- Signed Planning Form Due Date _____
- Date Project Started _____
- Checkpoint Date _____
- Date Project Completed _____
- Conference Held _____
- Oral Presentation Date _____
- Project Due Date _____

Practical Problem Statement:

Project Description:

Goals of the Project:

Plan for Action:

Signature of Student: _____

Signature of Parent or Adult Mentor: _____

Signature of Teacher: _____

Action Project Assessment Form

Description of Project:

Total Hours Spent on This Project: _____

On a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions below. Attach your responses to this form.

1. Why did you choose this project?
2. Did you accomplish your goals for this project? Why or why not?
3. What did you learn from this project?
4. How was the project of value to you, your family, and/or your community?
5. What did you well with regard to this project? What would you change if you did the project again?

Using the rating scale below, assign a rating to each of the statements. Then give this form to your parent or adult mentor and to your teacher to add their assessment. You may ask them to provide written comments on the back of this form.

4 = Strongly agree **3 = Agree somewhat** **2 = Disagree somewhat** **1 = Strongly disagree**

	Student Assessment	Parent or Adult Mentor Assessment	Teacher Assessment
A. The project was of value to the student and others.	_____	_____	_____
B. The project was a good use of the student's time.	_____	_____	_____
C. The student planned the project well.	_____	_____	_____
D. The student accomplished all of the established goals for the project.	_____	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____	_____

Student Signature : _____
Comments:

Parent or Adult Mentor Signature: _____
Comments:

Teacher Signature: _____
Comments:

Analyzing the Significance of Families

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about the significance of families?

Content Competency **5.0.1:** Analyze the significance of the family

Competency Builders:

5.0.1.1 Explore the meanings of family
5.0.1.2 Analyze functions of the family
5.0.1.3 Assess the role of the family in developing values
5.0.1.4 Identify stages of the family life cycle
5.0.1.5 Identify various family systems
5.0.1.6 Analyze trends in family composition in America
5.0.1.7 Analyze impact of social and cultural diversity on the family

Supporting Concepts:

1. Meaning of family
2. Functions of families
3. Family life cycle
4. Family composition
5. Social and cultural influences

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

Every society has four common goals: to ensure the survival and growth of infants and children into adulthood; to channel critical resources to its members; to provide the skills and knowledge needed to adapt to changing demands; and to foster the succession of generations so that as one generation of adults ages and dies the next generation is ready to assume leadership. Families perform critical functions that help achieve each of these four goals.

Families are one of the very few institutions in which people have the opportunity to form long-term intimate relationships. The quality of family relationships plays a key role in the well-being of family members, the effectiveness of the socialization process, and the ability of individuals from each family to

be effective in school, work, and community. What is more, the family relationships one observes and experiences as a child provide the initial script for enacting adult family roles such as spouse and parent.

Background

As our society has changed, so has our definition of family. An early definition provided by Burgess and Locke (1945) defined family as "a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption; constituting a single household; interacting and communicating with each other in their respective social roles (husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister); and creating and maintaining a common culture." (p. 8). More recent definitions have become less restrictive in some respects, and more focused on the socioemotional and mental health functions of families.

Compare the definition given above by Burgess and Locke to that provided in a recent textbook, *Marriages and Families: Making Choices and Facing Change*, by Lamanna and Riedmann (1991, 4th ed.) "A family is any sexually expressive or parent-child relationship in which people–usually related by ancestry, marriage, or adoption– 1) live together with commitment, 2) form an economic unit and care for any young, and 3) find their identity as importantly attached to the group." (p. 6). As with other recent definitions of family, this definition reflects the many arrangements of individuals who enjoy intimacy and serve a nurturing function for one another but who may not be engaged in the reproductive function and who may not be married.

Thus, some family scientists define a family as a group of individuals who share a theme and goals, a long-term commitment to one another, and resources, often including a common living space. Many family scholars think of family more as a process, a system of developing, meaningful relationships in which intimacy and continuity can provide the feelings of trust and well-being that serve as a foundation for optimism and a feeling of hopefulness about the future. This process is not only important for children growing up, but for adults with each other, and for adults and their aging parents.

In our society, the legal definition of family has important implications. From a legal perspective, the family has its beginning in the act of marriage which establishes the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of marital partners as well as of other kinship bonds such as parent-child, grandparent-grandchild, or in-laws. The legal definition of family has implications for contractual agreements, private insurance benefactors, health insurance benefits, and government social services.

These family definitions make reference to structure–the people in the family and their formal relationships–husband, wife, father, mother, child, etc. Some definitions emphasize the nuclear family (marital partners and their children through birth and/or adoption), broader definitions encompass cohabiting couples in a long-term relationship including couples of the same sex, couples who are childless, communal arrangements, and extended family relationships including the creation of kin-like ties with close friends who have a special commitment to protecting and promoting one's family.

None of these family forms is new in modern times. They have all existed in earlier periods of history, including early American history. Single parent families are more likely to arise through divorce in modern

times as compared to widowhood in the past. And family size has definitely declined over the past years. Perhaps what has changed more dramatically is the number of adults and children who experience several family forms as they go through the transitions from marriage to divorce, a single-parent family, and remarriage, and in the process become attached to a large and complex kinship network. This change introduces new demands for building and managing family relations across generations and among a number of family boundaries. Examples of major changes in family structure from 1970 to 1991 are illustrated in **Changes in Family Structure** (p. 99).

Family functions refer to meeting the needs of family members. These functions differ from one society or culture to the next, and the significance of the functions varies depending on the stage of the family's development and the needs of its members. Most scholars agree that families in modern, post-industrial societies serve at least three critical functions: they provide the basis for emotional support and intimacy; they serve as a primary source of economic support, including meeting basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, and physical safety; and they serve as the basic reproductive and childrearing unit. Contemporary dialogue about the roles and strengths of modern families often focuses on the ability or inability of families to carry out these functions adequately.

Families are a special type of group in that they are usually comprised of members who are at very different developmental levels and whose fates are interdependent. Family scholars are interested in understanding how families change over time. A major framework for examining this question is called the Family Development Perspective. This perspective refers to a study of the patterned changes in family structure, role definition, communication, and resource distribution that take place as family members meet changing demands and adapt to ongoing life stresses. The perspective assumes that family members are interdependent, and that as one changes, so do the others. The perspective also assumes that there are age-related changes in the needs and competencies of each family member as well as in the demands and resources of the family group. By looking at changes in family size, age composition, and occupational status of the breadwinners, seven stages of family development have been identified:

1. Newly established couple (childless)
2. Childbearing families (infants and preschool children)
3. Families with schoolchildren (one or more children of school age)
4. Families with secondary-schoolchildren (one or more children in adolescence)
5. Families with young adults (one or more children aged 18 or over)
6. Families in the middle years (children launched from parental household)
7. Aging families (parents in retirement)

These stages are useful in comparing families, especially in understanding the potential impact of a life event on families at different points in family development and for thinking about changing priorities of family functions. The stages are also useful in making historical comparisons about how the timing of family transitions and the resulting changes in adaptive behaviors have changed over time. Finally, the stage model is useful in understanding processes of individual and family adaptation as family members adapt to normative and non normative family transitions.

However, the model is limited in its usefulness since not all families move through all these stages, and some families are formed after some of the stages have already passed. Families may begin outside the marital relationship when unwed adolescents or older women have babies. Some families remain childless; some families are formed after remarriage when toddlers, school-age children, or adolescents are present from the start. As a result of widowhood and divorce, many adults create new families after having completed many of the stages of family development in a previous family. And some families include aging grandparents, parental adults, and young children in the same household. These variations are important for understanding challenges that family members face in building and sustaining effective relationships.

Changes in life expectancy have important implications for the patterns of change and growth in family development. For people born in 1920, the life expectancy was 54; for those born in 1990, the life expectancy was 75. For those who reached age 65 in 1990, the life expectancy is another 15 to 19 years. As a result of this longer life span, couples have a longer time period together after their children reach adulthood. Adults are likely to have a longer time for a relationship with their aging parents. The number of four generation families is growing, extending the possibility for a sense of family history, tradition, and continuity through direct sharing from one generation to the next over a much longer period of time.

References

Bristor, M. W. (1990). *Individuals, families, and environments.* Iowa: Kendall/Hunt.

Burgess, E., & Locke H. (1945). *The family: From institution to companionship.* New York: American Book Co.

Kephart, W. M., & Jedlicka, D. (1991). *The family, society, and the individual.* (7th ed.) New York: Harper Collins.

Lamanna, M. A., & Riedmann, A. (1991). *Marriages and families: Making choices and facing change.* Belmont, CA; Wadsworth.

Mattessich, P., & Hill, R. (1987). Life cycle and family development. In Sussman, M. B., & Steinmetz, S. K. (Eds.) (1987). *Handbook of marriage and the family.* New York: Plenum Press, 437-469.

Settles, B. H. (1987). A perspective on tomorrow's families. In Sussman, M. B., & Steinmetz, S. K. (Eds.) (1987). *Handbook of marriage and the family.* New York: Plenum Press, 157-180.

Sussman, M. B., & Steinmetz, S. K. (Eds.) (1987). *Handbook of marriage and the family.* New York: Plenum Press.

U. S. Bureau of the Census. (1992). *Statistical abstract of the United States: 1992* (112th ed.). Washington DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

Analyzing the Significance of Families

Learning Activities

1. Meaning of family

a. Complete **My Thoughts on the Meaning of Family** (p. 94). In pairs, share your responses. Write the question, "What is the meaning of family?" on the chalkboard. List possible directions for study to learn about the significance of families in our society, such as those listed below. Identify possible learning experiences you could organize to develop your understanding of the meaning of family.

(1) Definitions of family
(2) The role of the family in society
(3) A historical perspective on families
(4) A sociological perspective on families (trends affecting families, family patterns, demographics)
(5) Functions of the family

Teacher Note: Provide students with a preview of the activities in this module to create an advanced organizer for understanding the meaning of family. Note student interest in particular areas and focus the remaining activities to meet student and community needs.

Discussion Questions
- *What is the significance of families in today's world?*
- *Why are families important to individuals? To society?*
- *What would it be like in society if we had no families?*

b. Complete **About the Importance of Families** (p. 95). Interview and post responses of friends, family, and community members about the importance of family in their lives. Note similarities in the responses.

c. Complete **Comparing Definitions of Family** (p. 96).

Discussion Questions
- *What are the similarities in these definitions? The differences? Why do these similarities and differences exist?*
- *What value perspectives are represented in the various definitions?*
- *With which definition do you most identify? Why?*
- *How is a family similar to or different from other groups to which you might belong?*
- *How might these definitions broaden your concept of family? Limit your concept of family?*
- *Why are definitions of family important?*

Analyzing the Significance of Families

d. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose one of the following topics and write a report about that topic. Use library, classroom, and community resources to prepare your report. Present your report to the class at some point during this unit, depending on the topic you have chosen.

(1) Families Throughout History
(2) The Family of the Future
(3) Social Trends Affecting Families
(4) Family Demographics: What Do Today's Families Look Like?

e. Design a bulletin board for this unit of study entitled, "Is the American Family in Trouble?" Highlight issues such as those listed below. Throughout the activities in the unit, add relevant statistics, newspapers articles, and other information related to these issues.

(1) Marital Breakup: Increases in the rate of family dissolution means that many of today's children will spend part of their childhood in single-parent homes.
(2) Quality of Life for Children: An increasing number of children are born into poverty. Numbers of children with physical and emotional problems are on the rise. Violence against children is increasing.
(3) Changing Values: Individual goals are more frequently a greater priority than actions that are best for others.
(4) Time Spent with Family: With increasing numbers of working parents, families spend less time together.

Discussion Questions

- *Does the information we are learning in class confirm these as important issues?*
- *In light of these issues, are families still important to individuals? Society?*
- *What can families do to meet the needs of family members in light of these issues?*

Teacher Note: The issue of the breakdown of the American family is one often debated in our society and should certainly be considered in the Family Relations course. It is important to tie the variety of learning activities in this and other modules to the question of the ability of the family to carry out essential functions that contribute to the well-being of individuals and society. As the course unfolds, the learning activities should ultimately identify what can be done to strengthen families in light of these current issues.

f. **Action Project:** Create a family tree by recording the names of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and other ancestors. Find the information you need by talking with parents, grandparents, other relatives, or in your local library. Your school or local librarian can offer books and information about researching family history. After you have compiled your family tree, show it to family members and interview them about your ancestor's families using questions such as those listed below.

(1) What was your family like?
(2) Where did they live?
(3) What was their daily life like?
(4) What did they do for a living?
(5) How did religion and education affect their family life?
(6) How were their families different from or similar to yours today?

2. Functions of families

a. Use classroom resources to identify and describe the functions of the family, such as those listed below. Write each function at the top of a large sheet of newsprint. In small groups, choose a sheet and list specific examples of how families can fulfill that function. After a two-minute period, trade newsprint sheets with that of another group and add to the list on that sheet for a one-minute period. Continue trading with other groups and adding to the lists until you have had an opportunity to look at all the sheets. Post the newsprint sheets in the classroom.

(1) Responsible childrearing: Having and caring for children, teaching them values and a sense of their culture
(2) Economic support: Providing for practical needs such as food, clothing, and shelter in order to create physical security
(3) Emotional security: Meeting needs for affection, companionship, and intimacy

Discussion Questions

- *Why do people need families? Why does society need families?*
- *Which of these functions are most important? Least important? Why?*
- *Is one function more important than the others? Give reasons for your answer.*
- *What human needs (physical, emotional, self-esteem, safety, or intellectual) are reflected in these functions?*
- *What would happen if the family did not fulfill basic functions?*
- *Which needs are easiest for families to provide? Most difficult?*

b. **FHA/HERO:** Make a collage about your family that represents activities, interests, and ideas that are important to your family. Share your collage at a chapter meeting and explain how your collage represents the functions of families. Create a school display of the collages, highlighting the important functions of families, entitled "Families Make a Difference."

c. Read the case studies below and decide which family functions are fulfilled in these situations and which are going unfulfilled.

(1) Doug is ten years old. His family seldom does anything together. His mother works second shift, and he never sees her until the weekends. Doug's older brother is living away from home. When Doug is at home, he usually watches television alone. He is responsible for taking care of himself.

(2) Juanita's family consists of five brothers and sisters and her mother and stepfather. Her mother is very busy taking care of all the children in the family. Juanita's parents and brothers and sisters rarely express affection or talk about their love for each other. After all, they are too busy working and taking care of everyone. Juanita sometimes feels as if no one really cares about her.

(3) Robert's parents are constantly putting him down. His parents are both successful in their careers and want Robert to succeed in life as well. They feel it is their job to "toughen him up" for the real world.

(4) Katrina dreads going home every day after school. Her father is an alcoholic and is rarely home. Her older sister has a three-month-old baby and has little time to talk to Katrina. No one pays any attention to Katrina at home.

Discussion Questions

- *Why is it difficult for some families to fulfill family functions?*
- *What factors may affect families' ability to fulfill family functions?*
- *What are the short-term and long-term consequences of these situations for the family members? For society?*
- *Where could a person get assistance if his or her family did not meet his or her needs?*
- *What services are available to address these needs?*

d. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a history teacher to class to discuss how families fulfilled family functions throughout history. Identify which family functions seemed to be more or less important in specific historical periods. Provide reasons for your responses.

e. React to the statement, "the home is the first place children learn values." Identify reasons why the family has such an important role in developing values. Use classroom resources to identify ways that families teach values, such as those listed below. On index cards, write examples of situations in which parents share values with children in these ways. Collect and shuffle the cards. Choose a card at random, read the situation, and explain how it is an example of teaching values to family members.

(1) Teaching by example: Demonstrate values in the choices made and behavior chosen.
(2) Direct teaching: Explain to family members what is right or acceptable behavior; explain values behind family rules and how values guide family decisions and problem solving.
(3) Religious education: Involve family members in religious training that provides principles to live by.

Discussion Questions
- *Can parents teach values? Give reasons for your answer.*
- *What are the consequences if values are not taught in the home?*
- *What are the most important values a person should teach to his or her family?*

f. In small groups, select one of the activities below to study the ways in which families teach values to family members. Share your findings with the class. As a class, develop a chart of specific examples of values held by families and the ways in which those values are taught to family members.

(1) Watch a television program about families and identify a specific value that the television family believes to be important. Explain specific examples of ways in which that value is taught to family members.
(2) Read a short story about a family situation. Identify a specific value of the family in the story and the way in which the family communicates the importance of that value to family members.
(3) Interview members of several families to determine values important to them. Ask them to identify ways that they teach those particular values to family members.

Discussion Questions
- *Which methods for teaching values in families are most often used? Why?*
- *Why should families be aware of ways to teach values to family members?*
- *Which methods are used in your family?*

g. **Action Project:** Interview members of your own family to determine values important to them. Talk with members of your family who have taken a leadership role in teaching values to other family members. Ask them to explain ways they have communicated those values in the family. Observe your family interaction for one week and identify ways values are being communicated. Write a report summarizing your family's values and the way those values are taught in your family.

h. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook about how your family fulfills family functions. Use the questions below to guide your reflection.

(1) What are the most important things families do for family members?
(2) What are the most important things your family does for you?
(3) What are the most important things you do for your family?
(4) What would our society be like if families did not fulfill these functions?
(5) How do the functions of the family relate to the meaning of *family*?

3. Family life cycle

a. Design a poster or bulletin board featuring the **Family Life Cycle** (p. 97). In cooperative learning groups, choose one stage of the life cycle and use classroom resources and **Family Developmental Tasks** (p. 98) to answer the questions below about that stage. Find pictures representing families in that stage and collect newspaper articles about issues facing families in that stage. Design a poster illustrating that stage to display in the classroom. Form new cooperative groups with each member of the new group having studied a different stage of the family life cycle. Take turns presenting the stage you studied to other members of your group, until all group members have a good concept of all stages of the family life cycle. Check your understanding of the life cycle by drawing pieces of a pie chart from a paper bag and labeling and assembling them to represent a pie chart of the family life cycle. Also, take turns drawing pieces of paper from the bag representing different developmental tasks and placing them beside the correct life cycle stage on the pie chart. Use this time to reinforce group members' understanding with encouragement and further explanation as needed.

(1) What are the characteristics of this stage?
(2) What developmental tasks should be accomplished during this stage?
(3) Approximately how long does this stage last?

Discussion Questions

- *Why is it important to study the family life cycle?*
- *How can an understanding of the family life cycle help in building strong families?*
- *What are the similarities between the stages? The differences?*

b. Working in your original group that studied a particular stage of the family life cycle, design a Survival Kit for that stage by collecting materials from the classroom or from home. Possible examples might include diapers, a calendar or time planner, a children's book, a hammer, or a spoon. Present your survival kits to the class, providing a rationale for the items you selected. Display in the classroom.

Discussion Questions

- *What kinds of concerns do families in each stage of the life cycle have?*
- *How do these concerns affect the individuals in each family stage?*
- *What future goals might a family at each stage need to prepare for?*

c. Read the situations below and identify the stages of the family life cycle represented in each situation. Explain the idea that not all families proceed through the stages in the same sequence and may even form a family when some stages have already passed.

(1) A man with three teenage children who has remarried. He and his new wife decide to have a baby of their own.
(2) A married couple who have chosen not to have children.
(3) A divorced woman who lives with her teenage daughter and one-year-old grandchild.
(4) A married couple with grown children who care for their aging parents in their home.

Discussion Questions

- *Do all families proceed through the family life cycle stages in the same way? Why or why not?*
- *What are the potential consequences of variations in the traditional life cycle stages?*
- *How would the needs of the families in the above situations be different from those in traditional life cycle stages?*

d. **FHA/HERO**: Invite members from various families representing each stage of the family life cycle to class for a panel presentation. Develop a list of questions to ask the panel members, such as those listed below.

(1) What challenges do you and/or your family face in your present family life cycle stage? Previous stages?
(2) Which stage has been the easiest? The most difficult? Why?

(3) Which stage did you enjoy the most?
(4) What advice would you give to other families to help them in the stages you have been through?

e. **FHA/HERO**: Collect items for a family in need in your community. Discuss the family life cycle stage of the family you have chosen, and identify items based on your understanding of their needs.

f. **Action Project:** Research demographic data on the number of Americans in various stages of the family life cycle. Identify characteristics of various generational groups such as "Baby boomers" and "generation X" noting how these groups are moving through various family life cycle stages and the economic, political, and social impact of the stages of these groups on our society. Report your findings to the class and lead a discussion about the implications of these demographic trends.

4. Family composition

a. Complete **Changes in Family Structure** (p. 99). Using classroom resources, define various types of families or family patterns, such as those listed below. Survey students at your school to determine the different types of families in which they live and classify the survey responses according to these patterns. Graph your findings.

(1) Nuclear
(2) Extended
(3) Blended
(4) Single-parent
(5) Communal
(6) Adoption/Foster

Discussion Questions

- *What factors have affected trends in family composition over the years?*
- *What are the advantages and disadvantages of each family type?*
- *What strengths can be found in these families?*
- *Do responsibilities of family members differ in these families?*
- *How might family patterns affect the ability of the family to fulfill family functions?*

Teacher Note: If surveying students to determine types of families in which they live is not appropriate in your community, use statistics available from your school district or other community resource.

b. View excerpts from television programs representing different types of families. Identify various issues, situations, and behaviors you observe. Compare and contrast the ways each family operates. Make a chart identifying the types of families you observed and the special challenges faced by each type of family.

Discussion Questions

- *Are the functions of these different types of families the same or different? Why or why not?*
- *What responsibilities do the members have?*
- *How do they resolve conflict?*
- *What special concerns do they face?*
- *Does the program create stereotypes about that family type? How?*
- *Do you feel the programs are realistic examples of families today? Why or why not?*
- *What trends have you noticed in the media's portrayal of families?*
- *How accurately do these media families portray reality?*

c. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose a family form and create a simulated family with the members of your group. Assign each group member a family role (parent, child, teenager, or extended family member). Choose one of the practical problems below so that each group has the same problem. Resolve the practical problem for your simulated family group using the **Practical Family Problems Think Sheet** (p. 29). Explain your solution to the class and justify your decision.

(1) One parent who is the primary wage earner loses his or her job. The bills are overdue, groceries for the week have not been paid for, and the car needs to be repaired. How would your family solve this problem?
(2) Family members disagree about the household jobs. Some members are taking on more responsibility than others. Jobs are not being done well. How would your family solve the problem?
(3) One member of the family feels the family does not spend enough time together. Each family member has his or her own activities and responsibilities. How can this problem be solved in your family?

Discussion Questions

- *How did the solutions selected differ? How were they similar?*
- *How does the family composition in each family type affect how the family approaches problems?*
- *What issues could the different families be facing because of their family type?*

d. **Action Project**: Develop a questionnaire to be given to two different types of families. Compare and contrast life in each type of family, including challenges faced and the way the family goes about resolving conflict and solving problems. With the family's permission, videotape the interview and show it to the class. Questions might include the following:

(1) What issues and concerns does your family face?
(2) How do you approach everyday issues or problems?
(3) What strengths do you see in your family? Limitations?
(4) Do you feel your family type has influenced the way you work toward your goals? In what ways?

5. Social and cultural influences

a. Create a display of photos of families of different sizes, forms, stages in the life cycle, and cultures. Explain ways in which these families are different and ways that they are the same. List strategies for relating to others who belong to families different from your own.

(1) Develop a regard for the interests of others.
(2) Seek the perspectives of others.
(3) Ask about and understand the traditions and values of others.
(4) Empathize with others.
(5) Recognize and resist stereotypes and prejudice.
(6) Celebrate the uniqueness and culture of your own family.

Discussion Questions
- *Why is it important to have an appreciation of the diversity of families?*
- *Are some types of families better able to fulfill family functions than others? Why or why not?*
- *What skills do you need to be able to relate to people different from yourself?*

b. **FHA/HERO:** Using resources, define *culture*. Invite representatives from families of different cultures to participate in a panel discussion of cultural diversity among families. Divide the chapter into listening teams, with each team taking a different culture represented on the panel. Use the following questions to learn about families in that culture. Identify characteristics of families in that culture and ways that families preserve the culture. Create school displays entitled, "Celebrating the Cultural Diversity of Families."

(1) What rituals and traditions are related to your culture?
(2) What are the characteristics of families in your culture?
(3) What values are important to your culture?
(4) What is the history of your culture?
(5) How does your family pass on aspects of the culture to young family members?

Discussion Questions

- *What similarities do you see between these cultures?*
- *How are families in these cultures the same? Different?*
- *How does your family differ from families in these cultures? How are they similar to your family?*
- *How have other cultures influenced your present culture and family?*
- *How can we preserve the identity of these cultures in our society?*

Teacher Note: Assist students in selecting families from cultures represented in your community and perhaps some cultures that are not prevalent in your community.

c. **Action Project:** Spend time observing and interviewing two families, each from a different cultural group. Note similarities and differences between the two families. Write a report about your experience.

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. List three functions of the family and identify the possible consequences when families fulfill and do not fulfill each function.

2. Create two examples of family situations that illustrate the role of the family in developing values.

3. Identify stages of the family life cycle.

4. Identify at least three types of families.

5. Identify at least two trends in family composition in America, and analyze each trend by identifying the consequences of that trend for families and for society.

6. Given examples of several families, analyze the impact of social and cultural diversity on the families by explaining the social and cultural influences on that family.

Analyzing the Significance of Families

Classroom Experiences

1. In cooperative learning groups, choose a topic related to the meaning of the family and write a report about that topic. Use library, classroom, and community resources to prepare your report. Present your report to the class.

2. Make a collage about your family that represents activities, interests, and ideas that are important to your family. Share your collage and explain how it represents the functions of families.

3. Write a journal entry about how your family fulfills family functions.

4. In cooperative learning groups, choose one stage of the life cycle and use classroom resources to research that stage. Design a poster representing that stage to display in the classroom.

5. Working in groups, design a Survival Kit for a stage of the family life cycle by collecting materials from the classroom or from home that represent items needed in that stage.

6. Survey students at your school to determine the different types of families in which they live. Graph your findings.

7. View excerpts from television programs representing different types of families. Identify various issues, situations, and behaviors you observe. Compare and contrast the ways each family operates. Make a chart identifying the types of families you observed and the special challenges faced by each type of family.

8. In cooperative learning groups, choose a family form and create a simulated family with the members of your group. Assign each group member a family role (parent, child, teenager, or extended family member). Choose a practical problem and resolve the problem, using the practical problem-solving process. Explain your solution to the class and justify your decision.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Create a family tree by recording the names of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and other ancestors. Find the information you need by talking with parents, grandparents, other relatives, or in your local library. After you have compiled your family tree, show it to family members and interview them about your ancestor's families.

2. Interview members of your own family to determine values important to them. Talk with members of your family who have taken a leadership role in teaching values to other family members. Ask them to explain ways they have communicated those values in the family. Observe your family interaction for one week and identify ways values are being communicated. Write a report summarizing your family's values and the way that values are taught in your family.

3. Collect items for a family in need in your community. Discuss the family life cycle stage of the family you have chosen, and identify items based on your understanding of their needs.

4. Research demographic data on the number of Americans in various stages of the family life cycle. Identify characteristics of various generational groups such as "Baby boomers" and "generation X" noting how these groups are moving through various family life cycle stages and the economic, political, and social impact of the stages of these groups on our society. Report your findings to the class and lead a discussion about the implications of these demographic trends.

5. Develop a questionnaire to be given to two different types of families. Compare and contrast life in each type of family, including challenges faced and the way the family goes about resolving conflict and solving problems. With the family's permission, videotape the interview and show it to the class.

6. Spend time observing and interviewing two families, each from a different cultural group. Note similarities and differences between the two families. Write a report about your experience.

My Thoughts on the Meaning of Family

Complete the items below. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. A family is. . .

2. The most important thing families do for family members is. . .

3. The most important thing family members do for the family is . . .

4. Families are important to a community because. . .

5. Families are important to the world of work because. . .

6. Families are important to our country because . . .

7. Today's families are the same as the families of 100 years ago in these ways . . .

8. Today's families are different from the families of 100 years ago in these ways . . .

9. Some trends or issues affecting families today are . . .

10. In the future, families will need to be . . .

About the Importance of Families

Read the following quotations about the importance of families and post the quotations in the classroom. Explain the meaning of each quotation. Develop your own quotation about the importance of families and post it with others in the classroom.

The family is one of nature's masterpieces.
George Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, 1905-06

What families have in common the world around is that they are the place where people learn who they are and how to be that way.
Jean Illsley Clarke, *Self-Esteem: A Family Affair*, 1978

Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.
Jane Howard, *Families*, 1978

How many different things a family can be–a nest of tenderness, a jail for the heart, a nursery of souls. Families name us and define us, give us strength, give us grief. All our lives we struggle to embrace or escape their influence. They are magnets that both hold us close and drive us away.
George Howe Colt, *Life*, April 1991

Although there have been tremendous changes in the world, there are two things that will never change in our society: the developmental needs of children and the fact that society has always needed and continues to need strong families.
Rosalie Streett

A key strength of U. S. families is durability. Despite changes, hardships, and challenges, the American family has endured. Marriage and family life is still as important to Americans as ever.
M. A. Fine, author of *Families in the United States: Their Status and Future Prospects*

What has made this nation great? Not its heroes but its households.
Sarah Josepha Hale, 1788-1879, American writer and editor

Healthy families are our greatest national resource.
Delores Curran, *Traits of a Healthy Family*, 1983

Comparing Definitions of Family

Read the definitions of family from the various sources below and add any definitions from classroom or community resources. In the chart below, note similarities and differences between these definitions.

A group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption; constituting a single household; interacting and communicating with each other in their respective social roles (husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister); and creating and maintaining a common culture.
E. Burgess and H. Locke in *The Family: From Institution to Companionship*

A unit of intimate, transacting, and interdependent persons who share values and goals, responsibility for decisions, and resources and have commitment to one another over time.
American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

(1) A group of persons, sometimes living under one roof, who nurture and support one another physically and emotionally. (2) a mutually supportive team of individuals who work together and share skills and resources; an environment created by caring people where individuals learn to be productive members of society. (3) a context for discovery where individuals can comfortably accept challenges, make mistakes, have wins, be self-expressive, and grow at a personal pace.
Future Homemakers of America, Inc.

Two or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption who reside together.
U. S. Bureau of the Census

A unit composed not only of children, but of men, women, an occasional animal, and the common cold.
Ogden Nash

A definition of family from one or more classroom or community resources:

Definition:

Source:

Definition:

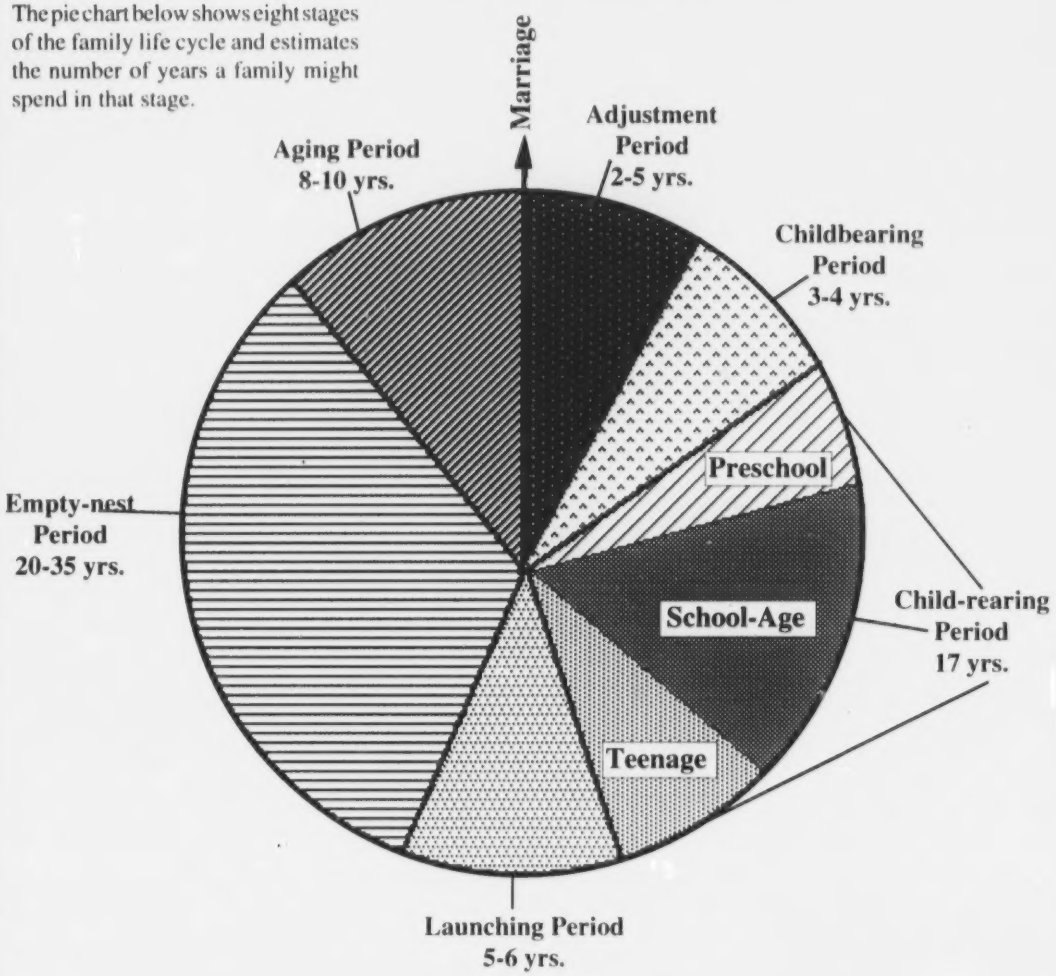
Source:

COMPARISON OF THE DEFINITIONS

Similarities	**Differences**

Family Life Cycle

The pie chart below shows eight stages of the family life cycle and estimates the number of years a family might spend in that stage.



Adjustment Period: Married couples without children

Childbearing Period: Oldest child's birth - 30 months

Childrearing Period

- Preschool: Oldest child 30 months - 6 years
- School Age: Oldest child 6 years - 13 years
- Teenage: Oldest child 13 years - 20 years

Launching Period: From first child gone until last child leaves home

Empty-Nest Period: From last child leaves home until adults retire

Aging Period: From retirement until death of both spouses

Family Developmental Tasks

Stage	Tasks
Adjustment Stage	Establish a home Establish an agreeable system of saving and spending money Establish agreeable family roles Establish communication patterns Establish a workable relationship with relatives Discuss the possibility of children and planning for their coming
Childbearing Stage	Adapt housing arrangements Meet additional costs Rework patterns of responsibility Adjust communication patterns Become involved in the community family traditions, goals, and values Plan for future children
Childrearing Period	Preschool Supply adequate space and facilities Meet expanding costs Maintain effective communication School Age Provide for activity and privacy Maintain finances Cooperate within family Teenage Provide adequate facilities Agree on money matters Share tasks Keep communication open Keep marriage relationship in focus
Launching Stage	Rearrange physical facilities Meet costs of launching family Reallocate responsibilities Keep system of communication open Come to terms with themselves as husband and wife
Empty Nest Stage	Assure security for the later years Maintain contact with grown children's families Keep in touch with brothers, sisters, families, and aging parents Maintain a comfortable home
Aging Stage	Find a satisfying home for later years Adjust to retirement income Adjust to a possible life alone Care for elderly relatives Maintain involvement in community Maintain contact with children and grandchildren

Source: Dr. Susan S. Coady. College of Human Ecology, The Ohio State University.

Changes in Family Structure

Examine the statistics in the table below. In small groups, respond to the reflection questions below. Share your response with the rest of the class.

	1970 Percentage	1991 Percentage
Types of Familes		
Married couples as a percent of all family households	87	79
Female-headed households, no spouse present, as a percent of all family households	11	17
Male-headed households, no spouse present, as a percent of all family households	2	2
Families by number of children under 18		
None	44	51
One	18	20
Two	17	19
Three or more	20	10
Living Arrangements of children		
Both parents	85	72
Mother only	11	22
Father only	1	3
Labor force participation of wives with husbands present (comparison 1975-1991)		
Children under 3	33	56.8
Children 3 to 5	42	64.7

Reflection Questions

What are the positive implications of these statistics for families? For society?

What are the negative implications of these statistics for families? For society?

What have you noticed about families that confirms these statistics?

Compiled from 1992 statistics obtained from the U. S. Bureau of the Census.

Family Relations

Nurturing Human Development

CONTENT MODULE 2

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about nurturing human development?

Competency 5.0.2: Nurture human development in the family throughout the life span

Competency Builders:

5.0.2.1 Identify physical, social, emotional, and intellectual developmental milestones
5.0.2.2 Describe how development is nurtured within the family
5.0.2.3 Analyze relationship between self-formation and stages of the life cycle
5.0.2.4 Enhance self-esteem of self and others
5.0.2.5 Identify basic needs of family members throughout the life cycle
5.0.2.6 Analyze how needs can be met within various family systems
5.0.2.7 Recognize role of various types of relationships in meeting human needs
5.0.2.8 Develop strategies for adapting to change throughout the life span
5.0.2.9 Analyze relationship between managing resources and meeting human needs
5.0.2.10 Develop strategies for managing resources to meet human needs

Supporting Concepts:

1. Nurturing human development
2. Developmental stages and needs
3. Self-esteem
4. Change throughout the life span
5. Management of resources to nurture development

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

Families are the primary groups in which individuals establish long-term, complex, intimate relationships. As a result, family members remain connected to and responsive to one another as each individual changes and develops across the life span. Whether we think of two adult partners and their changing needs, adults and their developing children, siblings, or adult children and their aging parents, the story of families is in part the story of attempting to nurture optimal development of individual family members within the framework of preserving a meaningful sense of group connection and inter-individual support.

Nurturing Human Development

At each period of life, a number of basic, developmental tasks must be accomplished in order to grow as a person and to function as a member of society. Generally, these tasks can be grouped by physical, emotional, intellectual, and social domains. In addition, at each period of life, as understanding of the physical and social world change, so does understanding of oneself. What is more, family members are commonly the primary source of support during periods of crisis such as illness, unemployment, or loss of a loved one, when an individual's typical capacity for daily functioning may be temporarily disorganized or reduced. Thus, when we speak of nurturing human development within families, we recognize that the resource of the family must be directed toward meeting needs and fostering development across a very broad range of human capacities and under a variety of conditions.

Background

There are many different models for understanding the critical milestones of development across the life span. Table 1 provides one perspective as developed by Newman and Newman (1995), in *Development Through Life: A Psychosocial Approach*. Within this perspective, the life span is divided into 11 life stages from the prenatal period to very old age. At each life stage, a few critical developmental tasks are identified, tasks which must be mastered in order to move on to the challenges of the next period of life. Typically, these tasks address development in the areas of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social functioning, as well as the domain of self-understanding. In addition, at each stage, one must resolve what psychosocial theory calls a psychosocial crisis. This crisis is a product of the gap between the skills and self-understanding the person has at the beginning of the stage and the demands or expectations of family and society at that time of life. The crises reflect a synthesis of the direction for healthy development for the individual and the direction for healthy development of the society. Thus, for example, while trust is critical for the infant in order to explore the environment, take risks, and form relationships in subsequent periods of life, trust is also critical for sustaining and enhancing social relationships that are at the core of any social group.

As a result of a positive resolution of each psychosocial crisis, an individual brings new ego strengths to bear in approaching the tasks of subsequent stages. When the crisis is resolved in the negative direction, certain core pathologies arise that tend to restrict further growth and establish a more rigid, defensive orientation toward self and society.

One of the key concepts of psychosocial theory is that there is an interdependence among individuals at different life stages such that the success that younger individuals have in accomplishing the tasks and resolving the crises of their life stages. The psychosocial maturity of older adults is likely to determine the quality of the nurturing environment for those who are younger; and at the same time, the energy and direction of development of the younger individuals can provide a stimulus that promotes the development of older adults.

Table 1
Stages of Development

Stage	Developmental Tasks	Psychosocial Crisis	Central Process	Prime Adaptive Ego Quality	Core Pathology
Prenatal (conception to birth)					
Infancy (birth to 2 years)	Social attachment Maturation of sensory, perceptual, and motor functions Sensorimotor intelligence and primitive causality Understanding of the nature of objects and creation of categories Emotional development	Basic trust versus basic mistrust	Mutuality with caregiver	Hope	Withdrawal
Toddlerhood (2 to 4)	Elaboration of locomotion Fantasy and play Language development Self-control	Autonomy versus shame and doubt	Imitation	Will	Compulsion
Early school age (4 to 6)	Sex-role identification Early moral development Group play Self-esteem	Initiative versus guilt	Identification	Purpose	Inhibition
Middle school age (6 to 12)	Friendship Concrete operations Skill learning Self-evaluation Team play	Industry versus inferiority	Education	Competence	Inertia
Early adolescence (12 to 18)	Physical maturation Formal operations Emotional development Membership in peer groups Sexual relationships	Group identity versus alienation	Peer pressure	Fidelity (I)	Isolation
Later adolescence (18-22)	Autonomy in relation to parents Sex-role identity Internalized morality Career choice	Individual identity versus identity confusion	Role experimentation	Fidelity (II)	Repudiation
Early adulthood (22 to 34)	Marriage Childbearing Work Lifestyle	Intimacy versus isolation	Mutuality among peers	Love	Exclusivity
Middle adulthood (34 to 60)	Nurture of the marital relationship Management of household Parenting Management of career	Generativity versus stagnation	Person—environment fit and creativity	Care	Rejectivity
Later adulthood (60 to 75)	Promotion of intellectual vigor Redirection of energy toward new roles Acceptance of one's life Development of a point of view about death	Integrity versus despair	Introspection	Wisdom	Disdain
Very old age (75 until death)	Management of physical changes of aging Development of a psychohistorical perspective Travel through uncharted terrain	Immortality versus extinction	Social support		Diffidence

As this model of the life span suggests, the outcome of the early stages of development are directly and intimately influenced by the quality of family life. In the prenatal period, the mother provides the immediate uterine environment that effects fetal growth. Exposure to toxic substances, high stress, inadequate health care, inadequate nutrition, and use of drugs can all interfere with optimal fetal growth. The pregnant woman's emotional and physical state are influenced by her family, especially by the quality of relationship with the baby's father and by the quality of relationship with her own mother. This kind of embeddedness of child outcomes within the psychosocial context of family life continues as one looks at the challenges of infancy, toddlerhood, early, and middle school age. By adolescence, it is clear that youngsters who have a strong sense of connection and closeness to parents expand on this base of affection and support by developing new and complex peer relationships. Peer relationships extend social connection but cannot compensate for a lack of parental understanding and emotional support.

Adolescence brings a critical challenge to children and their families. At this period of life, children are faced first with the crisis of forming a group identity and then with the crisis of forming a personal identity. Throughout these two psychosocial crises, parents must communicate support and understanding, but, at the same time, encourage the young person to make independent decisions and experience a new sense of self-reliance. For many families, this is a particularly difficult period in the parent-child relationship. Parents tend to worry about their children's safety and about their children's ability to use good judgment. Children want to know that their parents care about them, but they do not want to be over-protected or mistrusted. At this time, the child's self-concept and self-understanding undergo rapid and dramatic revision with new levels of self-consciousness, new experiences of self-insight, and a new ability to consider oneself persisting into the future. Eventually, most young people emerge from adolescence with a sense of themselves as separate and distinct individuals, still emotionally connected to their family of origin, but ready to move into adulthood, to make commitments, to embrace certain values, and to form enduring relationships of their own.

Social science research has identified several critical processes that help foster optimal development at various periods in the life span.

- *Mutuality*. In infancy, a key is the establishment of mutuality between the infant and the caregiver. Infants and caregivers need to establish a synchrony of interactions, so that the caregivers understand what the infants need and are able to meet those needs, and infants build a sense of confidence that their needs will be met. Within the context of this synchrony, infants are gradually able to delay their needs for immediate gratification and to modify their needs to fit into a more rhythmic, predictable pattern. Caregivers who are sensitive to their infant's states and changes in state, who respond with affection and reassurance in a timely manner when their infants are distressed, and who provide the appropriate amount of stimulation–neither overly intrusive nor neglectful–are able to foster in their infants a sense of positive, secure attachment.

- *Parenting*. In toddlerhood and into early school age, one of the most important features of parent-child relations is the establishment of a democratic parent style (Baumrind, 1991). This approach to parenting combines sensitivity to a child's needs, supportive, open communication, a willingness to

include children in family decision making, and the clear communication of family values and limits. Within this style of parenting, discipline is carried out largely through inductions, in which adults explain to the child why their actions were wrong, especially pointing out the consequences of their actions for others, and help the child think of other ways to express their needs and feelings that would not have negative consequences for themselves and others. In other words, adults begin to socialize children by setting certain limits, fostering concern for others and, at the same time, acknowledging and validating the strong feelings and needs that children are likely to experience. As a result, children achieve a continued sense of closeness with their parents, a growing confidence in their ability to make good choices, and a well-internalized set of values and beliefs that take into account the needs and feelings of others as well as their own needs and feelings.

- *Education.* Throughout infancy and childhood, parents and older siblings also provide the earliest and most intimate patterns of education, a process that may continue in some form throughout life. Adults and siblings are an infants' first language partners. They provide the stimulus environment, including toys, songs, stories, and games that foster cognitive and motor development. They are the skilled teachers who help young children accomplish tasks of daily life and who draw children to the next higher level of thought and action. And as the children get older, parents often serve as their advocates with the larger educational system, arranging for extracurricular activities, monitoring their child's school performance, and trying to make sure that their child's artistic, athletic, and intellectual needs are being met. During adolescence children and parents in many families begin to have serious, thoughtful discussion. Children bring new ideas into the family, introduce new technologies, and often encourage parents to try new activities or think about old issues in new ways. So the intellectual resources of the family are enriched as the children expand their own educational experiences and bring new talents and ideas back to their family of origin.

- *Intimacy.* When partners form a family by establishing a commitment to one another, they experience the challenge of trying to establish intimacy. Intimacy is a psychosocial process that cannot be achieved on one's own–it takes two. Intimacy can be defined as the ability to experience an open, supportive, tender relationship with another person without fear of losing one's own identity in the process. Partners in an intimate relationship experience a mutual regard and respect as well as deep affection for one another. They are able to express their own views and at the same time appreciate the views of the other person without fear of being ridiculed or threatened. Intimate relationships are characterized by high levels of disclosure or openness in communication, and a sense of mutual enrichment, a sense that each person feels he or she is enhanced through closeness and interaction with the other. Once achieved, intimacy in the marital relationship must be continually nourished and revitalized. Partners must allow one another to experience individual growth, and at the same time, find ways for the relationship to incorporate this growth. Many studies have found a critical link between intimacy between adult partners and the quality of parent-child relationships. Intimacy between adult partners provides the emotional anchor around which the family endures constant challenges and changes and through which parents convey reassurance, support, and affection to their children.

- *Social Support.* Another critical process that helps sustain and promote development is social support. Social support is a broad term that includes the quantity and interconnectedness or web of social relationships in which a person is embedded, the strength of those ties, the frequency of contact, and the extent to which the support system is perceived as helpful and caring. Social support has been found to be a critical factor in sustaining the quality of parenting for adolescent mothers or single mothers following divorce. It is a key factor in helping women and men adjust to the crisis of unemployment. It provides critical resources during adjustment to widowhood. And social support plays a major role in maintaining physical and mental health in later life. The reason that social support is so important is that it generally fosters a personal sense of esteem as well as providing material resources, information, and encouragement. People who are part of a strong social support network feel that they are loved and valued, they believe that they have something to offer others and that others really do care about them. Of course, family members typically play key roles in one's social support network. Siblings, parents, and grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins are all likely to be found on the list of people's social support. And depending on the situation, different members of the social support system provide different types of resources. For example, in the situation of unemployment, a man or woman may need love and understanding from their spouse or life partner, but they may need encouragement about finding a new job from a friend or colleague outside the family. At the time of widowhood, a woman may look to her children as the first source of support during bereavement, but she may look to her siblings in the long run as she attempts to rebuild her life.

References

Baumrind, D. (1991). Parenting styles and adolescent development. In R.M. Lerner, A.C. Petersen, & J. Brooks-Gunn (Eds.), *The encyclopedia of adolescence.* New York: Garland Press.

Jayakody, R., Chatters, L. M., Taylor, F. J. (1993). Family support to single and married African American mothers: The provision of financial, emotional, and child care assistance. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 55,* 261-267.

Maslow, A. H. (1971). *The farther reaches of human nature.* New York: Viking Press.

Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Religions, values, and peak-experiences.* New York: Penguin Books.

McLanahan, S., & Adams, J. (1987). Parenthood and psychological well-being. In R. Turner and J. Short (Eds.), *Annual Review of Sociology* (Vol. 13). Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews.

Newman, B., & Newman, P. (1995). *Development through life: A psychosocial approach.* Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Patterson, G. R. (1992). Developmental changes in antisocial behavior. In R. D. Peters, R. J. Mcmahon, & V. L. Quignsey (Eds.), *Aggression and violence throughout the life span.* New Burry Park, CA: Sage.

Learning Activities

1. Nurturing human development

a. Using resources, define the word *nurture* and post the definition in the classroom. In small groups, choose one of the pairs of family members below and create an example of a situation in which the first family member is nurturing the second family member. Share your situation with the rest of the class. Following the activity, respond to the statement, "Nurturing is. . ." Post the responses in the classroom.

(1) A mother and a newborn baby
(2) A father and a two-year-old
(3) An older sibling and a preschool child
(4) A teenage brother and his school-age sister
(5) A father and his preadolescent daughter
(6) A mother and her adolescent son
(7) A husband and his early adult wife
(8) A teenage son and his middle adult mother
(9) An adult daughter and her aging father

Discussion Questions
- *What do the situations you have created have in common? How are they different?*
- *How is the situation you created an example of nurturing?*
- *Why is it important for families to nurture family members?*

Teacher Note: If many of your students come from troubled families where nurturing is rare, you may begin this activity by providing examples of nurturing situations for each of the categories, such as written examples or brief clips from television programs that illustrate nurturing. Then ask students to write an example on their own. Choose the small groups so that students in the groups have a variety of family experience. This concept will be further developed in later modules, but it is essential that students understand nurturing in order to build healthy relationships with family members.

b. Complete **Nurturing Development in Families** (p. 117)

Discussion Questions
- *How do these examples represent nurturing?*
- *How are the examples similar? Different?*

c. **Action Project:** Visit a nursery or preschool and observe the interaction between caregiver and child. Identify situations you believe are nurturing to the child's development. Record these situations and note similarities and differences. Write a summary of your findings.

2. Developmental stages and needs

a. Using a dictionary, write the definition of the word *development* on the chalkboard. Use classroom resources to identify different types of development, such as physical, social, emotional, and intellectual. Write the description of each type on the chalkboard.

> **Teacher Note:** When helping students develop the concept of developmental stages, emphasize that these stages are a tool to use when deciding how best to nurture family members, rather than a regimented format through which growth must rigidly proceed. There are many factors that influence these stages, yet knowledge of these stages can be useful as we look at appropriate ways to nurture family members.

b. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose a stage of development listed below and research that stage, identifying developmental tasks to be accomplished and approximate ages at which the stage is encountered. Present you findings to the class in a skit that depicts the developmental tasks of that stage. Create a poster that includes pictures and words appropriate for nurturing people at that stage of development. Display the posters in class and note similarities and differences between the ways to nurture each stage of development.

(1) Infancy
(2) Toddlerhood
(3) Preschool
(4) School age
(5) Preadolescent
(6) Adolescent
(7) Early adult
(8) Middle adult
(9) Aging

Discussion Questions

- *How can the stages of development be used as a tool for nurturing family members?*
- *Why is it important to be aware of these stages when nurturing family members?*
- *Are there stages of the development when nurturing is more important? Less important?*

- *How do the developmental tasks represent different types of development (physical, social, emotional, and intellectual)?*
- *How are the developmental tasks at each stage different? Similar?*
- *Which stages have the most difficult developmental tasks? Why?*
- *Which stages have the fewest developmental tasks? Why?*
- *Which developmental stages have you experienced? Encountered in your family?*

Teacher Note: Classroom resources such as textbooks or audiovisual materials are needed for the above activity. If no such resources are available, the information provided in Table 1 (p. 103) may be modified for student use.

c. Form small groups, with each member of the group having studied a different stage of development in Activity 2b. Complete **Stages of Development** (p. 118) by sharing the information about your stage with all group members. Share your completed charts with the class and add any information missing on your chart.

d. In Family Relations Research Teams, draw a circle on a large sheet of paper, placing eight to ten rays outward from the circle. In the center of the circle, write the word *needs* and the stage of development you researched in Activity 2b. On the rays, write words or phrases that represent needs of people at that stage of development. When all the needs are listed, place a star beside the needs you feel are most important to that particular stage. Compare the needs you identified with those listed on **Maslow's Pyramid of Human Needs** (p. 119). Define unfamiliar terms. Explain where the needs you identified are depicted on Maslow's Pyramid.

Discussion Questions

- *How can being sensitive to the needs of family members help nurture development?*
- *Are some needs more prevalent in some stages than in others? Why or why not?*
- *How did you go about selecting the most important needs for your stage?*
- *Which of these needs should be met in families?*
- *What happens when families cannot meet these needs?*
- *Where else can individuals go to have these needs met?*

e. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook about your experience with developmental stages and tasks. Identify stages you remember in your own life and the ways in which family activities nurtured your development. Identify stages of family members you know and how the family activities in their lives support their development.

f. **Action Project:** Interview members of your family to determine their activities related to the developmental tasks of their stage of development. Ask older family members to reflect on stages which they have experienced. Use the questions below in your interviews. Compile your findings in a written report.

(1) What is most important to you at this stage of your life?
(2) What are your most important needs?
(3) What do you remember about being in other stages of development?
(4) What changes occurred as you moved from one stage to the next?
(5) How did you cope with these changes?

g. **FHA/HERO:** Compile a list of community agencies that help families meet the needs of family members. Identify those that help with particular developmental stages. Take a field trip to visit several of these agencies or invite representatives of the agencies to class to speak.

h. **Action Project:** Volunteer at a community agency that serves the needs of families. Keep a journal of your volunteer work and write a summary of how this experience helped you gain an understanding of human needs and stages of development.

3. Self-esteem

a. Using resources, define *self-esteem* (Suggested definition: appreciating one's own worth and having the character to be accountable and act responsibly) and identify the characteristics of individuals with high self-esteem and low self-esteem. Draw a picture on the chalkboard of a tripod with three legs. Label the tripod, "Positive Self-esteem." Label each of the three legs with, "Having Skills," "Feeling Appreciated," and "Being Responsible." Explain how each leg is important to support the tripod. Read each of the factors below and describe how each factor could influence these three aspects of self-esteem.

(1) Beliefs and values about personal worth
(2) Inherited characteristics
(3) Family relationships
(4) Experiences
(5) Environmental factors
(6) Relationships with friends and others
(7) Culture

Discussion Questions

- *Why is positive self-esteem important in a family? In the workplace? In the community?*
- *How do family relationships influence self-esteem?*
- *Which of the factors affecting self-esteem can you control? Not control?*

b. In small groups, draw two silhouettes of a person, one on each of two large sheets of newsprint. On the first silhouette, list things that can happen in families to support the development of positive self-esteem. Include types of behavior and words or phrases that family members do to support self-esteem. On the second silhouette, list things that can happen in families to interfere with the development of positive self-esteem. Include words or behaviors that are insensitive to needs and are dominating or oppressive. Display the silhouettes in the classroom and note similarities and differences between the responses of various small groups. Compare the behaviors that enhance self-esteem with those listed below.

(1) Providing words of encouragement
(2) Having confidence in a person's abilities
(3) Helping a person learn new skills
(4) Listening to a person's opinions and feelings
(5) Making opportunities for a person to participate in making decisions about things that will affect him or her

Discussion Questions

- *How important is the influence of family in developing a positive self-esteem?*
- *Is it possible for family members to have a negative influence on self-esteem even though they mean well?*
- *Do the behaviors you have identified have different meanings for different families? Different family members? Why or why not?*
- *What can family members do when their family situation does not support positive self-esteem?*
- *What skills do you need to enhance the self-esteem of others?*

c. Using resources, define the word *affirmation*. Read **Affirmations for Family Members Throughout the Life Cycle** (p. 120-121). Using life cycle stage posters developed earlier in this module, compare the affirmations to the developmental tasks and characteristics of each stage. Explain why the specific affirmations have been chosen for various stages and how these affirmations relate to supporting and nurturing family members. As needed, identify other ways to reword the affirmations to make them culturally appropriate. Choose an affirmation and create a role-play illustrating how that affirmation could be used in a family setting to support family members.

d. Design a bulletin board entitled "Heart Hugs" that illustrates affirmations for family members of various ages. Cut out shapes of hearts with two arms attached to each side of the heart. Create and write an affirmation and the age for which the affirmation is appropriate on each heart shape and curl the arms forward to represent a hug. Display the affirmation hearts on the bulletin board.

4. Change throughout the life span

a. Read the situations below. Create a chart on the chalkboard summarizing the situations showing the developmental stage, needs, and stresses or conflicts of each situation. Explain how changes in developmental stages can result in changing needs and sometimes cause stress and conflict in the family.

(1) Carl and Cassandria have been married about two years. Their first child was born two months ago. Carl and Cassandria were very happy as a married couple and enjoyed spending time together. Now that the baby has come, they seem to spend less and less time together. Carl feels their relationship is suffering because of the time the baby demands of Cassandria.

(2) Angie's daughter recently turned two and Angie feels that her daughter is constantly into trouble. He daughter seems to constantly be getting into things she shouldn't, climbing on furniture and shelving where she is in danger of falling, and throwing tantrums when she is guided away from things she would like to play with. Angie worries that her daughter is unhappy, and can't believe she is so different from the happy baby she has always been.

(3) George has a fifteen-year-old daughter whom he loves very much. He has always been proud that they have been very close. Lately, however, she has seemed very distant. She rarely talks to him and when he asks how things are going, she answers very simply, "Fine." George is worried that his relationship with his daughter is deteriorating.

(4) Bethany is preparing to go to college, something she has looked forward to for a long time. She has rented an apartment near campus and collected old furniture from friends and family. With classes beginning on Monday, she is moving in this weekend, but she is having second thoughts. What will it be like to live on her own? Will she be able to make it on her limited budget? Will she like being so far away from her family?

(5) Bill and Janet Rose have retired and were looking forward to spending time alone. After several months of retirement, however, Bill finds that he is often bored and watches television practically the whole day. Janet is going crazy having Bill around the house all the time.

b. React to the following quotation: "To exist is to change; to change is to mature; to mature is to create oneself endlessly" (Henri Bergson). Write a short paragraph about a time when you or someone you know had to adapt to changing developmental needs. In pairs, share your stories and identify strategies for adapting to changing needs. Read the list of factors below and identify how each factor might help when adapting to changes in developmental needs. Explain ways family members can nurture other family members experiencing changes.

(1) An awareness of developmental stages
(2) The ability to gain and process new information
(3) Skill in recognizing and expressing emotions
(4) An attitude that change is part of life
(5) A supportive family environment
(6) A system of support outside the family
(7) The ability to relax and manage stress

Discussion Questions
- *How will your needs change? How will they remain the same?*
- *What developmental changes can you expect in your life in the next five years? Ten years?*
- *What values and interaction patterns will help you continue to develop?*
- *What skills do you have for coping with these changes? What skills would you like to develop?*

5. Management of resources to nurture development

a. In Family Relations Research Teams, list specific tasks families must do to meet the needs of family members, such as the examples below. Compile a class list of these tasks on the chalkboard. Place a star beside those tasks you personally juggle on a daily basis. List the consequences of having to juggle many of these tasks at the same time.

(1) Preparing meals and snacks
(2) Providing clothing
(3) Maintaining a living environment
(4) Guiding young children
(5) Participating in family activities
(6) Reading to and playing with young children
(7) Balancing the checking account
(8) Purchasing food, clothing, and other goods
(9) Providing affirmations and encouragement

Discussion Questions
- *How do each of the tasks above represent examples of nurturing behavior?*
- *Why is it important to consider all levels of needs (physical, social, love and belonging, etc.) when nurturing family members?*
- *How can family members manage the numerous tasks associated with meeting family needs?*

b. Complete **Managing Resources in Families** (p. 122).

Discussion Questions

- *How does managing resources effectively contribute to the development of family members?*
- *Why are management skills important to nurturing family members?*
- *What happens when families have many nurturing responsibilities to juggle but no management skills?*
- *What management skills do you possess? Which would you like to improve?*

c. In cooperative learning groups, research one of the following management topics and present your findings to the class. Explain how the management skill you have researched helps to nurture family members.

(1) Basic Budgeting
(2) Time Management Techniques for Families
(3) Planning Shared Responsibilities in Families
(4) Community Resources to Help Families Manage
(5) Smart Shopping

Teacher Note: In preparation for the next learning activity, create a Family Wheel of Fortune by placing the various situations from **Management Challenges** (p. 123) on a large cardboard circle. Attach a spinner to the center of the circle, so that students can spin it and it will point to one of the situations. Mount the wheel on a bulletin board.

d. In Family Relations Research Teams, complete **Management Simulation** (p. 124).

Discussion Questions

- *How do your solutions to the management challenges reflect nurturing behavior?*
- *What actions might family members take in these situations that would constrain development?*
- *What management skills did you use in this simulation?*
- *Which management skills are most important when nurturing family members?*
- *How can the lack of management skills result in unmet needs of family members?*

e. **Action Project:** Set a goal with regard to the management of resources in your family, such as the use of time, money, or family skills and abilities. After discussion with family members, develop a plan to achieve your goal. Record your progress. Write a summary of your activities and evaluate whether or not you achieved your goal. Explain how the accomplishment of this goal has contributed to meeting the needs of family members.

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Given stages of development, identify at least two developmental tasks for each stage.
2. Given a case study of a family, describe at least three ways that development could be nurtured within that family.
3. Identify three ways to enhance the self-esteem of self and others.
4. Given various stages of development, identify at least two basic needs of family members at each stage.
5. Given case studies of various family systems, analyze how needs can be met within each system.
6. Given case studies of various types of relationships, explain how each type of relationship meets human needs.
7. Given case studies of various developmental stages, develop at least one strategy for adapting to change in each situation.
8. Given case studies of various opportunities for resource management, analyze the relationship between managing those resources and meeting human needs by explaining the consequences of effectively managing and mismanaging those resources.
9. Given family situations, develop at least two strategies for managing resources to meet the needs of family members.

Classroom Experiences

1. In small groups, choose examples of family members and create an example of a situation in which the first family member is nurturing the second family member. Share your situation with the rest of the class.
2. In cooperative learning groups, choose a stage of development and research that stage, identifying developmental tasks to be accomplished and approximate ages at which the stage is encountered. Present you findings to the class in a skit that depicts the developmental tasks of that stage. Create a poster that includes pictures and words appropriate for nurturing people at that particular stage of development.

3. Write a journal entry about your experience with developmental stages and tasks. Identify stages you remember in your own life and the ways in which family activities nurtured your development. Identify stages of family members you know and how the family activities in their lives support their development.

4. Choose an affirmation and create a role-play illustrating how that affirmation could be used to enhance self-esteem in a family setting.

5. In cooperative learning groups, research a management topic and present your findings to the class.

6. In small groups, create a family situation and assign each member of your group a family role. Develop a budget for the family and a plan that could be used by the family to share household responsibilities. Select a management challenge and explain how the family will deal with that situation.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Visit a nursery or preschool and observe the interaction between caregiver and child. Identify situations you believe are nurturing to the child's development. Record these situations and note similarities and differences. Write a summary of your findings.

2. Interview members of your family to determine their activities related to the developmental tasks of their stage of development. Ask older family members to reflect on stages that they have experienced. Compile your findings in a written report.

3. Volunteer at a community agency that serves the needs of families. Keep a journal of your volunteer work and write a summary of how this experience helped you gain an understanding of human needs and stages of development.

4. Set a goal with regard to the management of resources in your family, such as the use of time, money, or family skills and abilities. After discussion with family members, develop a plan to achieve your goal. Record your progress. Write a summary of your activities and evaluate whether or not you achieved your goal.

Nurturing Development in Families

Answer the questions in the chart below about how family activities can influence development of family members. Then ask the same questions of a classmate and record answers in the second column on the chart.

	You	A Classmate
What are two family activities, customs, or other special times that were especially meaningful to you?	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____
In what ways do you think each of these special times influenced your development?	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____

Reflection Questions:

- What are the similarities and differences between your answers and those of your classmate?
- What kinds of family activities and customs might you encourage in your future family?
- How would these activities or customs help family members' development?

Stages of Development

For each stage of development identified in the left hand column, write the developmental tasks related to each stage. In the third column, identify at least three strategies for nurturing family members at that stage.

Stage	Developmental Tasks	Strategies for Nurturance
Infancy		
Toddlerhood		
Preschool		
School age		
Preadolescent		
Adolescent		
Early adult		
Middle adult		
Aging		

Maslow's Pyramid of Human Needs

Abraham Maslow was a psychologist who studied the needs that affect human behavior. He identified five levels of human needs and placed them in a pyramid as illustrated below. The needs at the lower level of the pyramid must be met before the next higher need on the pyramid can be met.

Need for Self-actualization: A realization of full potential including concern and caring for the well-being of others.
Need for Self-esteem: A sense of pride from accomplishments. The need to be considered as adequate, worthy, and deserving of respect.
Need for Love and a Sense of Belonging: The need for acceptance, warmth, affection, and approval from others.
Safety and Security: The need for protection from harm or injury and for security from threats.
Basic Physical Needs: The need for food, water, shelter, warmth, and physical activity.

Source: Maslow, A. H. (1971). *The farther reaches of human nature.* New York: Viking Press.

Affirmations for Family Members Throughout the Life Cycle

What are affirmations?
They are life supporting messages–anything we do or say that lets others know that we believe they are lovable and capable. These messages affirm people's need and ability to grow and to do their developmental tasks.

Are there other ways to give these messages?
Yes, there are lots of ways. You give them by the way you touch, look, respond to, spend time with, and pay attention to people.

Why is it worthwhile to use these affirmations?
We can use these affirmations to help us remember that we are capable people. They help us love and care for others. They remind us that we are always growing and that there is hope.

How can affirmations help us?
We can use affirmations to help us raise our self-esteem so that we have healthier bodies and healthier minds. Our posture improves, we are more attractive, productive, loving, and joyful.

What are the "Love Affirmations?"
The "love affirmations" are marked with hearts. They are the affirmations that say "I love you unconditionally for yourself and for doing your developmental tasks."

Are there any rules for using the affirmations?
Yes. Don't give an affirmation to someone else at a moment when you don't feel and believe it. If you do, they may pick up the conflict in it and feel confused instead of affirmed. If you can't give some of these messages to your family members, do what you need to do for yourself (get help, rest, education, therapy, whatever) so that you can believe the messages and give them.

Being, Stage I, 0 to 6 months

I'm glad you are alive.
You belong here.
What you need is important to me.
I'm glad you are you.
You can grow at your own pace.
You can feel all of your feelings.
♥ I love you and I care for you willingly.

Doing, Stage II, 6 to 18 months

You can explore and experiment and I will support and protect you.
You can use all of your senses when you explore.
You can do all the things as many times as you need to.
You can know what you know.
You can be interested in everything.
I like to watch you initiate and grow and learn.
♥ I love you when you are active and when you are quiet.

Source: Jean Illsley Clarke, 16535 9th Avenue N., Minneapolis, MN 55447 (612-473-1840).

Affirmations for Family Members Throughout the Life Cycle

Thinking, Stage III, 18 months to 3 years

I'm glad you are starting to think for yourself.
It's OK for you to be angry and I won't let you hurt yourself or others.
You can say no and push and test limits as much as you need to.
You can learn to think for yourself and I will think for myself.
You can think and feel at the same time.
You can know what you need and ask for help.
♥ You can become separate from me and I will continue to love you.

Identity and Power, Stage IV, 3 to 6 years

You can explore who you are and find out who other people are.
You can be powerful and ask for help at the same time.
You can try out different roles and ways of being powerful.
You can find out the results of your behavior.
All of your feelings are OK with me.
You can learn what is pretend and what is real.
♥ I love who you are.

Structure, Stage V, 6 to 12 years

You can think before you say yes or no and learn from your mistakes.
You can trust your intuition to help you decide what to do.
You can find a way of doing things that works for you.
You can learn the rules that help you live with others.
You can learn when and how to disagree.
You can think for yourself and get help instead of staying in distress.
♥ I love you even when we differ; I love growing with you.

Identity, Sexuality, and Separation, Stage VI, Adolescence

You can know who you are and learn and practice skills for independence.
You can learn the difference between sex and nurturing and be responsible for your needs and behavior.
You can develop your own interests, relationships, and causes.
You can learn to use old skills in new ways.
You can grow in your maleness or femaleness and still be dependent at times.
I look forward to knowing you as an adult.
♥ My love is always with you. I trust you to ask my support.

Interdependent, State VII, Adult years

Your needs are important.
You can be uniquely yourself and honor the uniqueness of others.
You can be independent and interdependent.
Through the years you can expand your commitments to your own growth, to your family, your friends, your community, and to all humankind.
You can build and examine your commitments to your values and causes, your roles, and your tasks.
You can be responsible to your contributions to each of your commitments.
You can be creative, competent, productive, and joyful.
You can trust your inner wisdom.
You can say your hellos and good-byes to people, roles, dreams, and decisions.
You can finish each part of your journey and look forward to the next.
Your love matures and expands.
♥ You are lovable at every age.

Managing Resources in Families

Juggling the many tasks associated with nurturing family members requires skill in **management**. The purpose of management is to use resources to bring about results. **Resources** are those things you can use to achieve your goals. Examples of resources include the following:

- **Personal resources:** knowledge, skills, creativity, time, energy, confidence, self-esteem, or values
- **Environmental resources:** natural gas, water, air, plants, minerals, or oil
- **Material resources:** money, equipment, or supplies
- **Community resources:** businesses, government agencies, schools, or roadways

All of us possess resources. The management process involves deciding how to use these resources to reach our goals. Read the situations below and determine how each situation represents or does not represent an example of good management. Answer the following questions for each case study. Following your review of the situations, make a list of the characteristics of good management.

- *Are the needs of family members being met in this case study? Why or why not?*
- *Which types of resources are most important in this situation? Least important? Why?*
- *What are the consequences of this situation?*
- *Would you make different management choices in the same situation? Why or why not?*

1. Cassie's family is on a limited budget. Each of her children is aware of the amount of money he or she can spend on clothes for school. If the children wish to spend more than the budget allows they must earn extra money elsewhere. She reads newspaper ads, notes items on sale, and makes lists of her family's needs before going shopping. She avoids purchasing anything on impulse.

2. Grace's daughter is having trouble with math in school. Grace has set aside a certain time for her daughter to do homework and plans to be available if she needs help. She and her daughter have made a quiet place for homework that is well-lighted and has the necessary supplies. In addition, Grace has hired a tutor recommended by the school to help her daughter with algebra.

3. Robert takes time every day after work to stop at a local deli or fast food restaurant to pick up dinner. Even though he spends a little more on his food budget than he would like, he doesn't like to cook much and has very little time to think about what to prepare for his family.

4. Randal is having trouble getting his family's budget under control. Each month he can barely afford to pay the minimum payment on all his credit cards. He enjoys giving his family the things they want and he feels he earns a good salary. It is hard for him to say no to his family's requests for new clothes, videotapes, or other things they would like to have. So he uses the credit cards to get what they want when they want it.

5. Charise is a single-parent with a full-time job. Her son is going to be four and she is planning a big birthday party. She has asked her mother and sister to help with the party, so that she can enjoy the time with her son. Her mother is preparing the food. Her sister is sending the invitations and will help at the party. Charise is planning a few games that her son enjoys. On the day of the party, she cleans the apartment and sets out the supplies needed for the party. When her son's friends arrive, she is with him at the door to greet them.

6. William and Rita have three children, ages 12, 14, and 16. Rita has recently taken a full-time job. William wanted to have all members of the family share the household tasks, so he spent a whole evening developing a schedule listing who is to do what tasks. He taped the schedule to the refrigerator and told Rita and the kids about it. After a few days, William notices that no one is really following the schedule, and much of the work is still being left undone.

Management Challenges

1. Your refrigerator just died. You must replace it immediately.
2. You haven't been feeling well. You need to see the doctor and you haven't met your health insurance deductible.
3. You want to give holiday gifts to family and friends.
4. The muffler just fell off your car. You need to get your car repaired right away.
5. Your child needs a new winter coat.
6. The principle wage earner in your family loses his or her job.
7. Your son just put a big dent in the family car. It's bad enough to fix but not bad enough to meet your $200 deductible. . .not to mention that the premiums just went up.
8. Your daughter wants a new dress to wear to prom.
9. Your son plays basketball. He needs new tennis shoes.
10. It's the week of Thanksgiving and your oven just went out. The service man says it's not worth fixing, so you'll need a new one.
11. The transmission on your car needs serious work. Get it repaired right away. You need your car for work.
12. Your baby-sitter just quit. You need affordable daycare for your children.
13. The school nurse sent a note home saying your son needs glasses. Your health insurance doesn't cover eye doctors.
14. Your child is ready to start preschool. Find a quality, affordable preschool for two mornings a week.
15. Your children need clothes and supplies for school.
16. You have a baby on the way. You need to purchase some equipment and supplies.

Management Simulation

In small groups, create a family situation and assign each member of your group a family role. Draw a poster depicting your simulated family, the names of family members, and their ages. Note any special considerations. Adult members of the family, if employed, should indicate job titles and research and determine appropriate salary levels.

1. Develop a budget for your family.

Monthly Income	**Monthly Expenses**
_____	_____ Housing (including rent or mortgage and utilities)
	_____ Transportation
	_____ Insurance
	_____ Food
	_____ Clothing
	_____ Entertainment
	_____ Gifts

2. Develop a plan that your simulated family could use in sharing household responsibilities.

3. Spin the Wheel of Fortune to determine a special situation for your family. Explain how you will deal with that situation.

   a. In the space below, identify resources you might use to deal with the realities of this situation.

Resources	**Environmental Resources**
Community Resources	**Material Resources**

   b. After developing your plan, answer the questions below:
   (1) How can you continue to meet the needs of family members in this situation?
   (2) What are your most important resources for managing this situation?
   (3) Does your plan exhibit good management? Why or why not?
   (4) What changes did you have to make in your family budget?
   (5) Does this situation reflect one that would happen to most families? Why or why not?
   (6) How could families prepare for this situation?

Family Relations

Forming One's Own Family

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about forming my own family?

Competency 5.0.3: Analyze factors related to forming one's own family

Competency Builders:

- 5.0.3.1 Evaluate interrelationship between various family systems and personal goals and values
- 5.0.3.2 Recognize significance of relationships during adolescence
- 5.0.3.3 Describe concept of commitment and its role in family formation
- 5.0.3.4 Describe concept of love and its role in family formation
- 5.0.3.5 Define emotional and physical intimacy
- 5.0.3.6 Distinguish between responsible and irresponsible ways to express emotional and physical intimacy
- 5.0.3.7 Identify factors to consider in determining personal readiness to form one's own family
- 5.0.3.8 Evaluate personal readiness to form one's own family
- 5.0.3.9 Evaluate factors to consider in choosing a partner
- 5.0.3.10 Analyze gender expectations and division of tasks in relationships
- 5.0.3.11 Assess responsibilities of and personal readiness for parenthood

Supporting Concepts:

1. Personal goals and values for forming one's own family
2. Significance of relationships during adolescence
3. Role of commitment and love in family formation
4. Emotional and physical intimacy
5. Personal readiness for family formation
6. Factors in choosing a partner
7. Gender expectations in relationships
8. Responsibilities and readiness for parenthood

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

How will I know when I am ready for marriage? How will I know when I am ready for parenting? These are examples of the practical problems associated with family formation. Marriage is normative. In 1991, only ten percent of men and nine percent of women aged 40 to 44 had never been married. Among those 65 and over, four percent of men and five percent of women had never been married (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1992). Most people expect to marry, but they wonder about when is the best time and how to choose a good partner. The importance of these questions cannot be underestimated. Having a satisfying

marriage is a greater determinant of life satisfaction and general well-being than any other domain of life, including work, friendships, hobbies, and community activity (Weingarten & Bryant, 1987; Broman, 1988). However, few persons possess the communication, conflict management, and problem-solving skills critical to marital satisfaction. Couples must be ready to cultivate marriage as a working, growing relationship.

As with marriage, the desire to have children is also normative. In 1990, 9.4 percent of women aged 18 to 34 expected to have no children in their lifetime (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1992). In a national survey of married men and women who currently had no children but were of childbearing age, men were more likely to endorse the view that it is better to have children than to be child-free than were women (Seccombe, 1991). Women are becoming increasingly sensitive to the potential conflicts between career aspirations and motherhood. Especially among women who have had four years of college or more, an increasing percentage perceive that they will have to make a choice between having children and having a career. Nonetheless, it appears that for most people the practical problems related to childbearing are "when is the best time to have children?" and "How many children do I want to have?"

Background

Most Americans believe that the central ingredient in any enduring intimate relationship is love. Yet love is very difficult to define. Many adolescents who are just starting to explore romantic relationships wonder how they can tell if they are in love. Robert Sternberg (1988) found that love could be described as a set of feelings, thoughts, and motives that contribute to communication, sharing, and support. In his view, almost all types of love can be viewed as a combination of three dimensions: intimacy–the emotional investment in a relationship that promotes closeness and connection; passion–the expression of physical and psychological needs and desires in the relationship; and commitment–the cognitive decision to remain in the relationship. Love relationships differ in the balance and intensity of these three dimensions. For example, romantic love usually has a larger dose of passion than love between friends. In romantic love relationships, the lovers usually describe their relationship as characterized by fascination, exclusiveness, and sexual desire. The intensity of these characteristics accounts for some of the unsettling euphoria and preoccupation that often accompany deep and vital love. It also helps us understand why these kinds of relationships may be difficult to sustain.

One can speak of love of a painting, a poem, or a car without any response from the object itself. But when we talk about forming enduring love relationships, the focus must be on the achievement of mutuality between the partners. A truly intimate bond involves the ability of both partners to experience an open, supportive, tender relationship without fear of losing their own identity. The partners in such a relationship are able to understand each other's point of view. They experience a sense of confidence and respect for one another as well as a deep affection. In such a relationship, the partners can disclose personal thoughts and feelings without fear of rejection and sense an acceptance which permits the exploration of new feelings and ideas (Newman & Newman, 1995).

Where do adolescent relationships fall in the process of learning to love and making decisions about family formation? Adolescents tend to spend time in groups rather than in the formal dyads that used to comprise "dating." On special occasions, couples may go to a dance as a date but even couples who are "going

together" often hang out with other friends. Nevertheless, there is a lot of heterosexual pairing of brief or long-lasting duration, and even more speculation and conversation between friends about the opposite sex. This heterosexual activity during adolescence serves a large variety of functions that contribute to social skill development and to the formation of values and goals related to long-term relationships.

- It is a form of recreation. Girls and boys spend time together, have fun, and enjoy a sense of companionship.
- It is a way of achieving social status. Being part of a popular group or clique may improve one's standing in the social scene of the high school.
- It is a way to learn about the opposite sex. Adolescents begin to sort out the differences in how boys and girls handle certain situations, how they deal with conflict, what they like to talk about, and how they react to one another. In addition, adolescents begin to see individual differences, recognizing those characteristics that make one boy different from another or one girl different from another.
- It is a way to learn about one's own personality and needs. Through interactions in these groups, adolescents learn how vulnerable they are to peer pressure, the extent to which their ideas and values differ from those of others, how easy or difficult it is for them to disclose personal feelings, and how much they are viewed as a leader by their peers. By exploring intimate relationships within these groups, they learn to experience certain kinds of strong emotions including jealousy, love, and rejection.

As adolescents experience relationships with more than one partner, they begin to sort out the characteristics they truly value. They begin to appreciate the special qualities in a partner. They can recognize the difference between being physically attracted to someone and actually forming a close, intimate relationship. As part of forming these relationships, adolescents experiment with the expression of sexuality. They learn about their own sexual needs, how to appropriately express sexual feelings, and how to cope with unwanted sexual demands.

Most adults have experienced what they would consider to be deep, loving relationships that did not end in marriage. What determines whether an intimate relationship ends in marriage? Numerous factors have been identified:

- The social clock is the notion that there is an ideal age at which to encounter certain life transitions. Each social class has its own expectations about the best age for mate selection, and these normative expectations influence an individual's sense of "readiness" to marry.
- Work on personal identity must be far enough along so that each partner feels he or she can enter a deep emotional involvement with another person without fearing the loss of their own sense of self.
- Many young adults have goals related to personal identity that are considered a precursor to marriage. For example, families may encourage children to complete their education before marriage. A young person may set her or his own goal such as traveling, earning a certain income, or completing an advance degree before marriage.
- The increased incidence of divorce has introduced a new cautiousness about entering into marriage. From 1960 to 1988, the divorce rate rose from 9.2 divorces per 1000 married couples to 21 divorces per 1000 married couples (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1992). Although the rate reached its peak in 1979 and has dropped slightly since then, one longitudinal study found that slightly over half of the marriages ended in divorce (Norton & Moorman, 1987).

Forming One's Own Family

The relationship itself must reach a certain level of stability and closeness before a couple will make the commitment to marriage. Adams (1986) offered the notion of a four-phase process leading to marriage among couples in the United States.

Phase I– Original Attraction. Partners are selected from among those who are available for interaction. Initial attraction is usually based on a combination of physical attraction and valued behaviors such as a good sense of humor, shared interests, and a compatible interpersonal or social style.

Phase II–Deeper Attraction. The relationship becomes more serious as the partners disclose more about themselves and discover new areas of similarity, sexual compatibility, and shared values.

Phase III–Barriers to Breakup. As a result of spending time together in a variety of situations, the couple's relationship begins to take on a life of its own. Friends and relatives come to recognize the partners as a couple. The partners themselves approach tasks together, solve problems together, and discover that as a team they can accomplish more and enjoy the challenges of life more than they did without one another.

Phase IV–The Right One Relationship. At this point, the couple is ready to make a long-term commitment, usually expressed in the decision to marry.

At each phase, it is possible that the relationship will terminate or that it will move to a new, deeper level of commitment. In the early phases, commitment to the relationship is always in competition with alternate attractions, not only attractions to other potential partners, but attractions to invest more time in work, or to achieve some new goal that would make marriage or a serious relationship less likely. As the relationship continues, some kinds of disclosures, such as the realization that the partners differ in their values about having children or in life goals can terminate the relationship. But as these challenges are overcome, social forces act to sustain the relationship and prevent it from dissolving.

The societal context for childbearing in the United States has changed markedly from the 1950s to today. In general, women are having fewer babies than in the past. However, if one takes a longer historical look, the decline in fertility is the continuation of a 100-year trend. Involvement of women in the labor force, increases in educational opportunities for women, improvements in health care resulting in reduced infant mortality, and reproductive and contraceptive technologies have all contributed to women having greater control over their reproductive experiences. Married women are waiting longer to begin childbearing and are letting more time pass between births. Although we typically think of family formation as beginning with the establishment of a long-term commitment between the adult partners, there has been an increase in the numbers of babies born to unmarried women, especially adolescents and older women (in their 30s).

Thus, childbearing is occurring in a much more varied context today than in the past. Although social norms may operate to encourage or discourage entry into parenthood at a certain age, it is more important than ever that young people examine their own values, beliefs, and goals as they relate to the desire for having children and the ability to provide the long-term support for their children.

Forming One's Own Family

The decision to bear a child is a complex one that involves social factors, personal needs and values, the needs and values of others in one's family, and a consideration of one's resources. For these reasons, such decisions differ among various cultural groups, educational groups, economic groups, and, within these groups, from one couple of childbearing age to the next. There is no one right or best scenario for having children. It depends on what works out for the continuing optimal development of the parents, the child, and the parent-child relationship. Of course, many births to both married and unmarried women are "unplanned." However, even these births are a product of certain decisions–the decision to have sexual relations or the decision about whether or not to use a contraceptive.

Social factors include social expectations or norms for having or not having children at a certain age; norms about having babies outside of marriage; potential conflicts between other roles, especially the roles of student or worker, and the parent role; and pressures from family and friends to bear or not bear children.

In addition, there are personal needs and values that influence the decision. These needs and values may be related to one's religious beliefs; one's gender identity; the extent to which one endorses traditional or nontraditional gender-role expectations; and one's personality, especially characteristics that might be described as nurturant, optimistic, and caring. In surveys about the value of having children, most people emphasize emotional satisfactions, especially having someone to love, giving purpose and meaning to life, and bringing a new level of closeness and unity to the family. Other benefits are more pragmatic such as having a playmate for another child, having someone to care for them in their old age, or adding a new focus of activities and challenges in life. And some believe that having a child is a mark of having reached adulthood and evidence of the full expression of their male or female role (Seccombe, 1991).

Some research suggests that childbearing early in life is related to high levels of stress and rejection in the parent-child relationship, which lead the daughter to behave in impulsive ways and to seek affection outside the home (Belsky, Steinberg, & Draper, 1991). Many young adolescents express the view that by having a baby, they will finally have someone in their life who really loves them and who needs them. Thus, even though they may not have sought pregnancy, they are not unhappy about the outcome (Pete & DeSantis, 1990).

The needs and values of others may come into play. Marital partners may disagree about whether or not to have children or about the timing for having children. The demands of a first child who has some serious physical or mental challenge may influence the decision to have other children. The idea that having a child might save a marriage or bind a boyfriend into a permanent commitment are examples of how childbearing decisions are linked to other facets of relationships.

Finally, children involve significant costs. In the past, children were considered an economic asset. They helped contribute to the family economy, and they were viewed as an insurance that there would be someone around to care for the parents as their economic productivity declined in old age. However, today, children are valued more for their emotional and social contributions than for their economic contributions to the family. They require financial, emotional, and physical resources. In addition, the time and attention that are devoted to childrearing can be viewed as an opportunity cost in that this time

and attention cannot be directed to other activities. Finally, children often introduce new tensions into the marital relationship and reduce the amount of time the couple has for intimate adult companionship when the child is not present. Couples need to be confident of the strength of their relationship and believe strongly in the values and satisfactions associated with having children in order to offset these costs.

References

Adams, B. N. (1986). *The family: A sociological interpretation* (4th ed.). San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, & Jovanovich.

Belsky, J., Steinberg, L., & Draper, P. (1991). Childhood experience, interpersonal development, and reproductive strategy: an evolutionary theory of socialization. *Child Development, 62*, 647-670.

Broman, C. L. (1988). Significance of marriage and parenthood for satisfaction among blacks. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 50*, 45-51.

Newman, B. M., & Newman, P. R (1995). *Development through life: A psychosocial approach* (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Norton, A. J., & Moorman, J. E. (1987). Current trends in marriage and divorce among American women. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 49*, 3-14.

Pete, J. M., & DeSantis, L. (1990). Sexual decision making in young black adolescent females. *Adolescence, 25*, 145-154.

Schoen, R. (1992). First unions and the stability of first marriages. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 54*, 281-284.

Seccombe, K. (1991). Assessing the costs and benefits of children: Gender comparisons among childfree husbands and wives. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53*, 191-202.

Sternberg, R. J. (1988). *The triangle of love*. New York: Basic Books.

U. S. Bureau of the Census. (1992). *Statistical abstract of the United States: 1992*. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office.

Weingarten, H. R., & Bryant, F. B. (1987). Marital status and subjective well-being. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 49*, 883-892.

Learning Activities

1. Personal goals and values for forming one's own family

a. Write one function of the family identified in Module 1: Analyzing the Significance of Families at the top of a large sheet of newsprint. In small groups, choose one of the sheets of newsprint with a family function at the top and answer the questions below. Post the family function sheets of each group in the classroom. Individually, rank the functions in order of importance to your future family. Share your rankings and discuss similarities and differences in the order of importance. Explain how personal values and goals can influence these rankings.

(1) What does this function of the family mean?
(2) How will you provide this function to your future family?

Discussion Questions
- *Why did you select any one particular function as more important than the other functions?*
- *What values and goals influenced your rankings?*
- *What are the most important things you can do for your future family to provide this function?*

b. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook describing the family you would like to build in your future. Use the questions below to reflect on your future family.

(1) What values do you have now that will be important to your future family?
(2) What goals do you have for forming a family in the future? How will you know when you have achieved these goals?
(3) How will your future family be similar to or different from the family you have now?
(4) Which family functions will be most important in your family? Why?
(5) What skills will you need to form the type of family you would like to have?
(6) What decisions will you face as you form your future family?

c. In pairs, share the highlights of the journal entry you made in the previous learning activity, and make a list of decisions you will face as you form a family of your own. Share your list of decisions with the class and compare them with the following list of decisions. Compile a final list on the chalkboard. Explain how practical problem solving might be used in making these decisions and what types of information will be helpful as you create and evaluate alternatives.

(1) Should I get married?
(2) When should I get married?
(3) Who should I marry?
(4) Should I have children?
(5) When should I have children?

2. Significance of relationships during adolescence

a. Make a list of all the different types of relationships you have at the present time. As a class, classify your list of relationships into the categories listed below. Review Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as introduced in Content Module 2: Nurturing Human Development, and identify different types of needs met in the various relationships in your life.

(1) Family relationships
(2) Friendship relationships
(3) Male/female relationships (dating)
(4) Acquaintances through school, work, or community organizations

Discussion Questions

- *How have these relationships changed over the last few years as they have matured?*
- *How have these relationships remained the same over the last few years?*
- *Which of these relationships represent those in which you share your inner most thoughts and feelings? Why?*
- *Which of these relationships will continue throughout life? Which will not? Why?*
- *What circumstances might cause these relationships to end?*
- *How will having these relationships help prepare you for the relationships you will have as an adult?*

Teacher Note: The students in your community may have a different word or phrase that is used in place of the word dating. If so, incorporate this word into the next few activities. The object is to get students talking about adolescent male/female relationships and the opportunities and responsibilities involved in these types of relationships.

b. In pairs, write a definition for the word *dating*. Survey students at your school to determine how often they go out on dates and what activities they do when on a date. Chart your survey results and share with other groups. If necessary, revise your definition of *dating*. Post the definitions in the classroom.

Discussion Questions
- *Does your definition of the word dating cover the kinds of activities boys and girls do together in your community? Why or why not?*
- *What words do your friends use to describe such activities?*
- *Is dating different than it was ten years ago? The same? Why or why not?*

c. Complete **Getting Together** (p. 145).

Discussion Questions
- *What can you learn about yourself through dating?*
- *What relationship skills do you learn?*
- *What can you learn from a dating relationship that fails?*
- *How can dating help prepare you for future relationships?*

d. In pairs, interview your partner to determine the criteria for a good date. Ask about dating activities and behavior such as appropriate ways to get to know your dating partner and ways to express caring and respect. Using the criteria shared in the interview, create five to ten real-life dates that meet your criteria. Share with the class and identify criteria you have in common. Compile your criteria into "Guidelines for a Great Date."

Discussion Questions
- *Which criteria are most important? Least important? Why?*
- *How do the criteria you selected reflect your personal goals and values?*
- *Why should you be aware of your criteria for dating behavior and activities?*

3. Role of commitment and love in family formation

a. Bring in a recording of a love song to share with the class. Write down the lyrics of the songs and identify the message about love and commitment described by each song. Explain whether these songs match what you believe to be true about love and commitment.

Discussion Questions
- *Do these lyrics paint a realistic or unrealistic picture of love? Why or why not?*
- *Do these songs influence what people your age believe to be true about love? Why or why not?*

b. Interview two males and two females to determine their definition love. Note the ages of those you interview. Share your findings with the class. Then write your own definition of love in your journal. Keep this definition for later reference.

c. On the chalkboard, write various phrases that include the word love as a way to illustrate how this word is often used. Using classroom resources, identify different types of love, such as those listed below. Define and give examples of each type.

(1) Self-love
(2) Love of caregiver
(3) Love of peers
(4) Hero worship
(5) Love of opposite gender
(6) Mature love

d. Using your school librarian as a resource, research examples of definitions of love and loving relationships in literature. Choose classical poetry or essays on love, or read a biography or autobiography and analyze the role a loving relationship has played in that person's life story. Summarize the meaning of love as portrayed in the literature in a five-minute report to the class.

e. In Family Relations Research Teams, draw a chart with three columns: (1) What does a loving relationship look like? (2) What does a loving relationship sound like? and (3) What does a loving relationship feel like? In each column record examples of behaviors or feelings that characterize a loving relationship. Form new cooperative groups, compare your charts and add any new information. Read **Love or Infatuation?** (p. 146) and compare the information on your chart with the information on the handout. Discuss the questions below and share your responses with the class.

(1) How would a relationship characterized by infatuation affect your relationship with other friends? Your school work? You relationship with your parents?
(2) How would a relationship characterized by love affect your relationship with other friends? Your school work? You relationship with your parents?
(3) Does being infatuated lend itself to jealousy? Does being in love lend itself to jealousy? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions

- *Do you disagree with any of the characteristics identified on the handout? Why or why not?*
- *What are the most important distinctions between loving relationships and relationships based on infatuation?*
- *Why is it important to know the difference between love and infatuation?*

f. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a panel of couples who have been married for a various number of years. Create questions to ask the panel to determine a greater insight into the role of love and commitment in lasting relationships. Sample questions are listed below. After the presentation, write a definition of the word *commitment.*

(1) How important is commitment in a loving relationship?
(2) What type of values are reflected in this type of commitment?
(3) How does this type of commitment affect your goals?
(4) What are your expectations of a partner who has made such a commitment?
(5) What happens when the behavior does not meet the expectations?
(6) What can couples do to maintain love and commitment over a long period?
(7) What is the most important quality for enduring love?

g. Using the definition of love you initially wrote in Activity 3b, write a journal entry in your reflection notebook on whether or not you would revise that definition based on what you have just studied. Support your decision. Continue your journal entry by focusing on commitment. Use the questions below to reflect on your experience with commitment.

(1) What are your present commitments?
(2) What is the biggest commitment you ever had?
(3) What commitments do you expect to have in five years? Ten years?
(4) What do you need to do in order to be ready to accept these commitments?

4. Emotional and physical intimacy

a. Use classroom resources to define the word *intimacy.* Read **Seven Different Kinds of Intimacy** (p. 147).

Discussion Questions
- *What is the importance of each of these types of intimacy in a relationship?*
- *What is the role of each of these types of intimacy in the different relationships you have experienced?*
- *Do people have different needs for these levels of intimacy? Why or why not?*

b. List ways couples display emotional intimacy, such as those listed below. Explain why emotional intimacy might be considered one of the most important parts of a relationship.

(1) Meaningful conversation
(2) Careful listening
(3) Words of encouragement or appreciation
(4) Sharing of deepest feelings and thoughts

c. Complete **Responsible and Irresponsible Intimacy** (p. 148). In pairs, share your responses and list the distinguishing characteristics of responsible emotional and physical intimacy.

Discussion Questions

- *What criteria did you use to determine whether a behavior was responsible or irresponsible?*
- *Why do people sometimes behave in irresponsible ways?*
- *How do the responsible behaviors reflect the Universal Values identified in Process Module 2: Solving Personal and Family Problems?*
- *What are the long-term consequences of responsible behaviors? Irresponsible behaviors?*

d. **FHA/HERO:** Choose a topic related to responsible or irresponsible physical intimacy, such as those listed below. Invite a speaker or panel of speakers to class to discuss that topic.

(1) Acquaintance rape
(2) Physical abuse of partner
(3) Sexually transmitted disease
(4) Abstinence
(5) Birth control

Teacher Note: These topics should be selected with an awareness of value systems represented in your community, and the support of the Work and Family Life Program Advisory Committee and the local school board toward addressing these issues in the classroom.

e. **Action Project:** Choose an issue related to responsible expression of physical intimacy such as those listed below. Research how best to take action on that issue and design a pamphlet for distribution to your peers to inform them about that issue. Once the pamphlet is completed, distribute it to several of your peers and record their reaction to the material.

(1) Preventing Date Rape
(2) Avoiding Abusive Relationships
(3) How to Assert Your Rights and Feelings in a Relationship
(4) STD Prevention

5. Personal readiness for family formation

a. Complete the sentence, "A person is ready for marriage when. . ." Share your responses with the class. Complete **Personal Readiness for Family Formation** (p. 149). From the questions and the responses to the sentence, make a list of readiness factors for marriage. Individually, rank the factors in order of importance from most important to least important. In small groups, share your responses and note similarities and differences in the rankings.

Discussion Questions
- *Which of these factors are most important? Least important? Why?*
- *How are your personal values and goals reflected in your rankings?*
- *How is your knowledge of love and commitment reflected in your rankings?*

b. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook listing the personal goals you would like to achieve before marriage. Then, if you are planning to marry someday, list the goals you want to achieve after you are married. Then reflect on the questions below.

(1) Do you see marriage in your future? Why or why not?
(2) Would it be difficult to accomplish your first list of goals if you married sooner than planned? Why or why not?
(3) What will you need to do to accomplish the goals you have listed for after marriage?

c. Read **Predicting Marital Happiness** (p. 150).

Discussion Questions
- *Why do you think each of the favorable factors were included in the list?*
- *How would you sum up the favorable factors? The unfavorable factors?*
- *Which of the factors can you control? Which are impossible to control? Why?*

d. Read **Relationships–Deeper Commitments** (p. 151).

e. **Action Project:** Interview couples who have been married a number of years. Ask them about the traits they looked for in a marriage partner and the factors they considered before getting married. Report your findings in a written summary and an oral presentation to the class.

6. Factors in choosing a partner

a. Divide a sheet of paper into eight sections. In each section, write a quality you would like to have in a future marriage partner. Cut the paper into eight pieces and place them in order of importance according to which quality is most important down to that quality that is least important. In cooperative learning groups, share responses and choose three qualities you would agree as a group are most important. Share your list with the class. Note similarities and differences in

responses. Identify which of the qualities were most often selected as most important in a future marriage partner.

Discussion Questions

- *What are the long-term consequences of selecting a marriage partner with these qualities?*
- *What criteria did you use to decide which qualities were most important? Least important?*
- *Will you feel differently about this list of qualities five years from now? Ten years from now?*

b. Write a want ad for a future partner. Include at least four traits you are looking for in a future partner. Post your want ads in the classroom.

c. Complete **Desirable Qualities** (p. 152). In small groups, share your answers and identify similarities and differences in responses.

d. **FHA/HERO:** Hold a Qualities of a Future Partner Auction. Distribute **Auction Worksheet** (p. 153) and allow time for chapter members to consider which qualities they would like to bid on. Give each chapter member $1000 in play money. Choose an auctioneer. Offer each item for sale one at a time. Bids can be made in any amount of ten dollar increments. Each item may be purchased by only one chapter member. Following the auction, lead discussion with the questions below.

(1) Are you pleased with the qualities you purchased? Why or why not?
(2) If you could do it over again would you bid on or buy different items?
(3) If your partner were to have the qualities you purchased, would a future marriage be successful? Why or why not?
(4) If you were asked to rank order the items in terms of your preference, what would the order be?

e. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a family counselor or clergy person to class to discuss premarital counseling procedures.

f. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a panel of people from various cultures to discuss how selection of marriage partners is conducted in their culture. Note similarities and differences between their cultures and your own culture.

7. Gender expectations in relationships

a. Hold a roundtable discussion in same-gender groups. For female groups, identify, "Things Guys Do That Drive Girls Crazy." For male groups, identify "Things Girls Do That Drive Guys Crazy." Save responses for later discussion.

b. Complete **That's Your Job!** (p. 154).

Discussion Questions
- *How have the expectations of men and women changed in the last 20 years?*
- *Do you expect the roles in your future family to be the same as those in your present family? Why or why not?*
- *How might these jobs change as one moves through the life cycle?*
- *How should married partners decide what roles are appropriate for men and women?*

c. Complete **Marriage Contract** (p. 155). In pairs, share your contract and discuss how many of the responsibilities you identified represent traditional or nontraditional roles.

d. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a panel of former students who have recently been married. Ask the panel members to discuss how tasks are divided in their family. Develop questions such as those listed below.

(1) What things are you doing now that represent nontraditional roles?
(2) Are the roles you are performing similar to or different from the roles in the family in which you grew up?
(3) How did you go about deciding who would fulfill the various responsibilities in your family?
(4) Which roles, if any, tend to create conflict? Why?

e. Complete the statements, "Women are. . .," and "Men are. . ." Compile responses on the board. Indicate which of the statements you believe to be factual and which are myths about differences between men and women. In Family Relations Research Teams, research differences and similarities between men and women. Develop a chart highlighting biological, intellectual, and emotional differences between men and women. When your chart is complete, form new groups and compare the charts you have developed. Add any additional information to your chart that other groups have researched. Review the list made by same-gender groups in Activity 7a and your responses to the open-ended statements in this activity. Identify your observations about gender characteristics that are supported by research.

Discussion Questions
- *Are some societal expectations about differences between men and women supported by research?*
- *What are the greatest myths about the differences between men and women?*
- *How might this discussion affect your relationships with others?*
- *How will the information you learned be helpful as you form a family in the future?*

f. View excerpts from television programs to identify ways that male and female roles are depicted in the media. Keep a record of programs watched, male and female characters, and role responsibilities of the characters. In small groups, share your findings and draw conclusions about men's and women's roles in the media.

8. Responsibilities and readiness for parenthood

a. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook about your thoughts and feelings about parenting. Use the questions below to guide your reflection.

(1) I would want children because . . .
(2) I would not want children because . . .
(3) The thing I like best about children is . . .
(4) A good parent is someone who . . .
(5) A baby brings a couple . . .

b. In small groups, write a definition for *parenthood* and *parenting*. Use classroom resources to find definitions for these terms and compare them to your small group definitions.

Discussion Questions
- *Why is it important to understand the responsibilities of parenting?*
- *Should people think carefully before undertaking parenthood? Why or why not?*
- *What are the consequences when people become parents too soon? Without an understanding of the commitment involved in responsible parenting?*

c. Use classroom resources to answer the question, "What responsibilities do parents have toward children today?" Categorize the responses into the areas of responsibility listed below.

(1) Physical care
(2) Nurturing
(3) Guidance

Discussion Questions
- *Which responsibilities are most important? Least important? Why?*
- *Which responsibilities are most difficult to fulfill as a parent? Least difficult? Why?*
- *What happens when parents do not fulfill these responsibilities?*

d. In small groups, make a list of reasons for becoming a parent. Share your lists with the class. Identify those reasons you would consider to be positive and those you would consider to be negative reasons. Justify your response.

Discussion Questions

- *How did you decide which reasons were positive and which were negative?*
- *What happens when people choose to become parents solely for a negative reason?*
- *What happens when people choose to become parents mostly for positive reasons?*

e. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose one of the age groups below and research the costs of parenting a child at that age. Place your information in the form of a chart. Form new cooperative groups and share information so that your chart contains cost data for all the ages listed below.

(1) Childbirth and infancy
(2) Toddler
(3) Preschooler
(4) School age
(4) Adolescent

Discussion Questions

- *Should cost be a factor when considering readiness for parenthood? Why or why not?*
- *Are there ways to reduce or avoid any of these costs? Why or why not?*
- *What happens when parents cannot meet their financial obligations as a parent?*

f. Complete **Parenthood as a Personal Choice** (p. 156). Explain why each of the questions is included on the list.

g. Complete **What's It Like to Be a Parent?** (p. 157). In Family Relations Research Teams, compile the responses to the interview questions, noting similarities and differences in the interview data. Form new cooperative groups and share and compare findings.

h. **FHA/HERO:** Invite at least four brand new parents to class to discuss what the new experience of parenthood is like for them. Prepare questions to ask the panel, such as those listed below. Following the panel discussion, write a sentence or two summarizing the most important thing you learned.

(1) What is the greatest change in your life since the birth of your new baby?
(2) What are the financial commitments at this stage of parenthood?
(3) How much physical energy does it take to be a parent?
(4) How has the birth of your child affected your other life goals? Marriage goals? Career goals? Community involvement goals? Social goals?

(5) How has the birth of your child affected your relationships with others? Parents? Spouse? Neighbors? Friends? Work?
(6) What are the greatest challenges for you as a parent in this stage of your child's life?

i. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook summarizing your own readiness for parenthood and your goals and expectations with regard to being a parent in your future family.

(1) List several of your most important personal goals. Explain how each of these goals would be affected if you became a parent at your present age.
(2) Do you see yourself having children someday? If so, when?
(3) What factors will you consider when you decide whether or not you are ready?
(4) What type of parent do you wish to become?

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Write a paragraph explaining how personal goals and values will influence how one forms one's own family.

2. Given a variety of examples of different types of relationships, explain why each type is significant to development during adolescence.

3. Write a paragraph describing the concept of commitment and its role in family formation.

4. Write a paragraph describing the concept of love and its role in family formation.

5. Define emotional and physical intimacy.

6. Given examples of expressions of intimacy, distinguish between responsible and irresponsible ways to express emotional and physical intimacy.

7. Identify at least five factors to consider in determining personal readiness to form one's own family.

8. Given factors to determine readiness for marriage, evaluate personal readiness to form one's own family.

9. Evaluate factors to consider in choosing a partner by explaining the consequences of choosing a partner by considering and not considering each factor.

10. Given case studies, analyze gender expectations and division of tasks in each relationship by identifying the consequences of roles and expectations.

11. Given factors for parenting readiness, assess responsibilities of and personal readiness for parenthood.

Classroom Experiences

1. In small groups, survey students at your school to determine how often they go out on dates and what activities they do when on a date. Chart your survey results and share with other groups.

2. In pairs, interview your partner to determine the criteria for a good date. Ask about dating activities and behavior such as appropriate ways to get to know your dating partner and ways to express caring and respect. Using the criteria shared in the interview, create five to ten real-life dates that meet your criteria.

3. Interview two males and two females to determine their definition love. Note the ages of those you interview. Share your findings with the class.

4. Research examples of definitions of love and loving relationships in literature. Choose classical poetry or essays on love, or read a biography or autobiography and analyze the role a loving relationship has played in that person's life story. Summarize the meaning of love as portrayed in the literature in a five-minute report to the class.

5. Write a want ad for a future partner. Include at least four traits you are looking for in a future partner. Post your want ads in the classroom.

6. Design a marriage contract that reflects your values and goals with regard to how household tasks and family responsibilities should be divided between partners.

7. In cooperative learning groups, research differences and similarities between men and women. Develop a chart highlighting biological, intellectual, and emotional differences between men and women.

8. View excerpts from television programs to identify ways that male and female roles are depicted in the media. Keep a record of programs watched, male and female characters, and role responsibilities of the characters.

9. In cooperative learning groups, choose an age group and research the costs of parenting a child at that age. Place your information in the form of a chart.

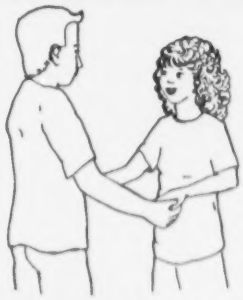
10. Interview at least three parents about their responsibilities as in parenting. In cooperative learning groups, compile the responses to the interview questions, noting similarities and differences in the interview data.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Choose an issue related to responsible expression of physical intimacy and research how best to take action on that issue. Design a pamphlet for distribution to your peers to inform them about that issue. Once the pamphlet is completed, distribute it to several of your peers and record their reaction to the material.

2. Interview couples who have been married a number of years. Ask them about the traits they looked for in a marriage partner and the factors they considered before getting married. Report your findings in a written summary and an oral presentation to the class.

Getting Together



Dating involves a wide range of activities that teenagers do together. Dating can involve attending a major event at school like the prom or a homecoming dance or it can involve an informal activity like studying together or going to a movie. Whatever the arrangements, though, dating can be an important type of relationship in your life. Dating can be an opportunity to—

- **Learn about yourself.** Dating relationships help you learn about your own personality and develop your self-esteem. Learning about your identity can help enhance your development.
- **Have fun.** Dating relationships can be a time to relax and enjoy yourself while doing activities that interest you.
- **Learn how to get along with others.** Dating builds social skills by helping you learn how to cooperate and be considerate of others.
- **Be with friends.** Sharing activities, events, thoughts, and feelings is an important part of building friendship in a dating relationship.
- **Learn gender roles.** Dating relationships help you learn about men's roles and women's roles, and how women and men should act toward one another.
- **Learn how to express affection.** Everyone has a need for loving relationships in their lives and must learn how to express these feelings. Dating relationships can develop into more intimate relationships in which people give and receive love and affection.
- **Choose a marriage partner.** Not all dating relationships end in marriage, and dating itself may not be focused on choosing a partner, but most mate selection does occur through dating. Dating can help a couple gain a better understanding of each other before marriage.

Dating can take a variety of forms, such as those identified in the chart below. Complete the chart by identifying the advantages and disadvantages of each form of dating. Share your responses with the class.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Random Dating		
Group Dating		
Double Dating		
Single Dating (Going Steady)		

Love or Infatuation?

Love

Infatuation

A relationship based on love means. . .	**A relationship based on infatuation means. . .**
Knowing the person well	Love at first sight
Loving the person as a total personality	Being infatuated with one characteristic, blind to faults
Experiencing feelings of self-confidence, trust, and security	Feelings of guilt, insecurity, and frustration are frequent
Kindlier feelings toward other people	A tendency to be self-centered and restricted
Joy in many common interests and an ongoing sense of being alive when together	Frequent boredom, especially when there is no sexual excitement or social amusement
Changes and growth in the relationship with an ongoing association, developing interests, and deepening feelings	Little change in the relationship with the passing of time
A willingness to face reality and tackle problems realistically	Disregard of problems and barriers; idealization with little regard for reality
A protective, maturing, caring concern for the beloved	Being overprotective and suffocating, discouraging independence
Reasonable and attainable daydreams	Unreasonable daydreams
Gaining ambition and looking to the future	Loss of ambition, appetite, and interest in everyday situations
Idealization based on reality	Idealization with no regard to reality
Facing problems frankly and attempting to solve them	Problems tend to be disregarded or glossed over
Physical attraction relatively small part of the relationship	Physical attraction is a large part of the relationship
Physical expression of affection demonstrated later in the relationship	Physical expressions of affection start from beginning
Meaningful physical contact as well as pleasurable	Pleasurable physical contact with no meaning
An enduring, relatively stable relationship	Sudden changes in the relationship for no reason
Possible postponment of marriage to allow growth in the relationship	Having an urge to marry immediately

Seven Different Kinds of Intimacy

There are at least seven different kinds of intimacy. The more of these types of intimacy people share, the closer their relationship will be. While it is unrealistic to think that a married couple would be intimate in all these ways, happily married couples share many of them.

Emotional
Involves loving and supporting one another

Religious
Involves holding similar religious beliefs or sharing a sense of life's purpose and meaning

Sexual or Physical
Sharing mutually satisfying physical expression of love and affection

Social
Sharing the same friends and joining the same groups

Aesthetic
Sharing forms of artistic expression

Intellectual
Talking about ideas and values, debating politics, or discussing literature

Recreational
Enjoying sports or hobbies together

Source: Connie Sasse. *Families Today*. New York: Glencoe Division, Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, 1994.

Responsible and Irresponsible Intimacy

In the chart below, list examples of responsible and irresponsible behaviors when expressing emotional and physical intimacy.

Emotional Intimacy

Responsible Behaviors	Irresponsible Behaviors

Physical Intimacy

Responsible Behaviors	Irresponsible Behaviors

Personal Readiness for Family Formation

How will you know when you are ready to marry? Think through the questions below and add any others you think would be important to consider before deciding to form your own family. What factors are reflected in the questions?

1. Am I relatively independent of my parents?
2. Do I make decisions on the basis of carefully gathered facts, or do I tend to jump to conclusions and make impulsive decisions?
3. Have I outgrown rebellion as a motive for choices? Can I be sure my decisions are based on careful conclusions about the wisest course of action rather than motivated by a wish to show that I can do as I please?
4. Have I completed my education?
5. Has my judgment stabilized as to the type of marriage partner I want? How long has it been since I considered someone very desirable who would not suit me now? Have I dated enough people to become acquainted with a variety of personalities?
6. How well can I support myself now with no outside help?
7. How well do I manage the money I earn? Do I run out of money and find that I don't know what happened to it? Or can I make and follow a budget?
8. Have I found job security? How long have I held the same position?
9. Am I old enough to undertake the responsibilities and obligations of being a husband/wife and a parent? Particularly, can I consistently sacrifice my own pleasures and wishes for the sake of others?
10. Am I ready to take on the regular routine of a permanent job? Of housework? Cooking meals? Caring for babies or children?
11. If things go wrong, must I find someone else to blame or can I accept responsibility for my mistakes and do the best I can?
12. Am I sufficiently flexible to make the adjustments that marriage requires? Can I include others in my plans and make satisfying compromises with in-laws and children as well as with my spouse?
13. If I qualify on all these important points, am I sure I am ready to settle down? Do I still need time to be free to run around with my friends? Am I still interested in dating a variety of people?

Predicting Marital Happiness

Can marriage success or failure be predicted? Not absolutely, of course. However, researchers have studied family life so much in the past few years that they have come up with a list of factors that are pretty good indicators of whether or not a marriage will be happy. The greater the number of favorable factors that are true for each partner, the greater their chance of finding marital happiness together. The greater the number of unfavorable factors that are true for each partner, the higher the likelihood of unhappiness and failure. Below is a list of some of these factors.

Favorable Factors	Unfavorable Factors
1. Same cultural background	Different cultural and/or economic backgrounds
2. Your parents were happily married	Parents were unhappy or divorced
3. You get along well with your parents	You have had much conflict with your family
4. Your parents disciplined you mildly but firmly	You were given little or no discipline or very harsh punishments
5. You had a happy childhood	Your childhood was unhappy
6. You are usually a happy person	You are often moody and unhappy
7. You are emotionally mature	You are emotionally immature
8. You are ready to forgive	You hold grudges
9. You are responsible	You are irresponsible
10. You are honest and trustworthy	You sometimes lie and can't always be trusted
11. You are a loving, giving person	You are self-centered and withdrawn
12. You feel your friend is easy to love	Your friend is often very unlovable
13. You are satisfied with the amount of attention your friend shows toward you	You are not satisfied with the amount of attention your friend shows toward you
14. Your marriage will be based on mature love	Your marriage will be based on infatuation
15. You are marrying for love	You are marrying to get out of the house, for money, because all your friends are and you don't want to be left out, or for some other reason
16. You are not being pressured into marriage	A pregnancy forces the marriage
17. You are anxious to marry as soon as possible	You wish you could wait a while longer
18. Your parents talked openly to you about sex	Sex was always hushed; a forbidden topic
19. Your parents approve of your friend	Your parents disapprove of your friend
20. You and your friend both have several other friends	You and your friend are loners without many other friends
21. You both have about the same amount of education	One of you has quite a bit more schooling than the other
22. You are about the same age	There is a marked difference in ages
23. You are 23 years of age or older	You are under the age of 20
24. You have dated over a year	You have known each other for only a short time
25. You agree on most things	You quarrel frequently
26. You have a good relationship with your future in-laws	You have a poor relationship with your future in-laws
27. You can talk with your friend about anything	There are some things the two of you can't talk about
28. Your friend is appreciative of you	Your friend is often critical of you
29. You are satisfied with your friend as he or she is	After marriage, you hope to change some things about him or her
30. Neither of you drinks too much	One or both of you drinks too much or too often
31. You like to do the same things	Your minds are seldom on the same track
32. You are religious	One or both of you do not practice any religion
33. You share the same religious faith	You are of different faiths
34. You agree on whether or not you want children someday	One of you wants to have children, the other doesn't
35. You agree about family planning	You disagree about family planning
36. You both feel a loving home life is of major importance	One of you does not consider it important
37. You share the same values	Your values are different
38. You share common goals	You want different things out of life
39. You will be financially independent	You will be financially dependent on parents or someone else
40. You can accept living with the amount of money you or your spouse is likely to earn	You will be unhappy unless you have more money
41. You feel sure that this is the person you want to marry	You sometimes doubt if he or she is the right partner for you
42. You bring out the best in each other	You bring out the worst in each other
43. Having a happy, successful marriage is very important to you and you are willing to work at it and make sacrifices for it	You have the attitude that "if it doesn't work out, you can always get a divorce"

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Relationships--Deeper Commitments

In all stages of relationships, there comes a time to decide whether you want to make a deeper commitment to the other person. Whether it is deciding to go out for a second time, to go steady, or even to get married, you face important choices at all stages of relationships.

A commitment is a pledge or promise on the part of each person that they are involved in the relationship together. It means that they are both willing to work on their future as a couple. They are both willing to share their life plans. Commitment is both to the other person and to the relationship they share. They are willing to admit to themselves and to others that there is more to them as a couple than there would be to each of them as separate individuals.

Below are some questions to ask to determine whether or not a relationship is right for you and that the time is right to make a deeper commitment:

Does this relationship make me feel good about myself? A healthy relationship makes you happy–at least most of the time. A healthy relationship doesn't keep hurting you or leaving you empty and confused.

Does this relationship bring out the best in you and your partner? A healthy relationship encourages both partners to grow and to live fulfilling lives, both in the time they spend together and in their individual time.

Are you both aware of the responsibilities involved in making a deeper commitment? A healthy relationship is realistic– you both know that a relationship takes work and you are willing to do your best.

Is there mutual understanding of each other's values, goals, and expectations for marriage?

Is there mutual acceptance of each other as a person with flaws and faults?

Does the relationship make you feel worthwhile and valuable both to yourself and the other person? Does it reinforce the other's self-esteem in the same way?

Is the relationship one in which you feel natural and can be yourself? Or do you find yourself trying to make yourself over into the kind of person you think the other wants?

Is the person someone you would like, admire, and enjoy, even if love were not present? Do you respect the other person?

Is it a relationship that others recognize and approve?

Do you share a number of interests, both socially and culturally?

Do you have the tolerance and generosity necessary to be flexible in any interests you do not share?

Do you have similar educational backgrounds? Are you relatively equal intellectually?

Do you both want the same kind of life and home?

Do you both have steady jobs and agree on major financial goals?

Desirable Qualities

Below is a list of qualities people may consider important in a prospective life partner. Rank them according to the importance you give them in looking for a possible spouse.

Ranking: 1 = Not important to me
2 = I don't know
3 = Important
4 = Very important to me

Scoring: Count only the last two responses, 3 and 4, as positive responses. Score the whole class or group on each point. What are the most desirable qualities? What are the least important qualities? For boys? For girls?

_____ is athletic
_____is affectionate
_____will not take advantage of me sexually
_____is polite and courteous or outgoing
_____is kind and considerate
_____has interests similar to mine
_____is fun to be with
_____is physically attractive
_____dresses well
_____is easy to talk to
_____is trustworthy
_____is thoughtful
_____has social class higher than mine
_____likes my family
_____is liked by my family
_____has friends whom I admire
_____likes my friends
_____is liked by my friends
_____loves me for myself
_____will be a good parent
_____is goal-oriented
_____believes in a close family life
_____is a religious and moral person
_____has a good career
_____has never been divorced
_____is financially independent
_____is wise and intelligent
_____is well educated
_____has good manners
_____is open and honest
_____is tolerant and forgiving
_____has power over others
_____is talented in many ways
_____is self-confident
_____is respected by others
_____is verbally articulate
_____comes from a similar background to mine

Questions for Reflection

1. How many qualities did you check as being "very important?"
2. Do you think you are being realistic in expecting to find these traits in a partner? Explain.
3. In looking over those qualities you identified as "very important," was there any pattern to your choices? Were you more concerned about your future partner's personal traits, the relationship between the two of you, or your mate's relationships with others?
4. What conclusions can you draw about your expectations for a future mate?

Auction Worksheet

Below is a list of possible qualities you might want in a marriage partner. Read them and complete the first column. You will have $1000 with which to bid for the qualities you would like in a marriage partner. As the auction proceeds, record the top bid for each item and who won the item.

Qualities	Amount You Would Like to Bid	Top Bid	Who Won Item
Faithful			
Physically attractive			
Trustworthy			
Good cook			
Athletic			
Outgoing			
Intelligent			
Fun to be with			
Dresses well			
From a wealthy family			
Has a high status			
Good job			
Talented			
Affectionate			
Supportive			
Good listener			
Creative			
Religious			
Sense of humor			
From a close family			
Likes children			
Well educated			
Cares about others			
Self-confident			

That's Your Job!

Listed below are various responsibilities of the work of the family. In the left hand column, indicate who in your family was responsible for that task. In the right hand column, indicate whether you believe the responsibility should be a man's role, a woman's role, or shared by both.

Who does this in your present family?		Who will do this in your future family?
_____	1. Put out the garbage	_____
_____	2. Prepare meals	_____
_____	3. Wash dishes	_____
_____	4. Clean	_____
_____	5. Express affection	_____
_____	6. Make the bed	_____
_____	7. Do the laundry	_____
_____	8. Shop for groceries	_____
_____	9. Put gas in the car	_____
_____	10. Fix things that need repair	_____
_____	11. Arrange social activities	_____
_____	12. Water the plants	_____
_____	13. Take care of the car	_____
_____	14. Pay the bills, write checks, and balance the checkbook	_____
_____	15. Change the light bulbs	_____
_____	16. Contact repair people when necessary	_____
_____	17. Manage conflict	_____
_____	18. File the taxes	_____
_____	19. Mow the grass	_____
_____	20. Choose home furnishings	_____
_____	21. Make final decisions on important matters	_____
_____	22. Prepare a family budget	_____
_____	23. Discipline children	_____
_____	24. Play with children	_____
_____	25. Care for children	_____
_____	26. Arrange for activities for children	_____

Marriage Contract

As you think about your future family and the daily chores and household responsibilities you will have to do, what role responsibilities do you see you and your spouse assuming? In the space below, write a contract to describe the responsibilities you believe are appropriate to each person's role. Be specific about the types of tasks you will perform and the tasks you will expect your partner to be responsible for.

	My responsibility	Spouse's responsibility
1. Maintaining your living space		
2. Cleaning your living space		
3. Caring for children		
4. Managing finances		
5. Arranging transportation		
6. Arranging entertainment and social activities		

Parenthood as a Personal Choice

The questions below can be used to determine readiness for parenthood. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Their purpose is to help those considering parenthood reflect on their readiness to be a responsible parent.

1. How would parenthood affect my education and career?
2. If my career were fulfilling to me, would I want to take on the responsibility of parenthood?
3. Would I be willing to give up the freedom of my social life to take on the responsibilities of caring for children?
4. Would I be able to combine going to school and raising children at the same time?
5. Have I developed a positive self-esteem?
6. Can I supply the necessary financial support for raising children?
7. Do I enjoy being with children?
8. Would I like having my own children around all of the time?
9. Do I enjoy working with children on their own level, and would I be able to remain interested in the things they want to do?
10. Is it easy for me to talk to children?
11. Do I want to give children the love they need?
12. Am I patient enough to deal with the all-day and all-night responsibility of caring for children?
13. Would I be upset if my children needed time that I had planned for myself?
14. Would I get angry and take things out on my children if I became upset over something that they might have done?
15. Would I be able to help children learn right from wrong?
16. Would I be able to show love to a child under all circumstances?
17. When I spend time with children, am I calm and relaxed?
18. Do I consider having children as limiting and confining?
19. Do I like children?

What's It Like to Be a Parent?

Interview at least three parents about the experience of parenting. Record your findings in the chart below.

	Parent #1	Parent #2	Parent #3
1. Why did you choose to have children?			
2. How did you decide how many children to have?			
3. What do you think are the most important qualities or skills of a good parent?			
4. What has been most rewarding (greatest joy) in being a parent?			
5. What has been the hardest part of being a parent?			
6. What advice would you give a young couple who is thinking about starting a family?			
7. When do you think a couple is ready for parenthood?			
8. What adjustments did you have to make after your first child arrived?			

Building and Maintaining Healthy Family Relationships

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about building healthy family relationships?

Competency 5.0.4: Analyze factors that build and maintain healthy family relationships

Competency Builders:

5.0.4.1 Identify characteristics of families who strive to meet the needs of all family members
5.0.4.2 Identify rights, responsibilities, and expectations of all family members
5.0.4.3 Analyze implications of power and authority within relationships
5.0.4.4 Analyze responsibility and ability of each family member to establish and communicate personal and family needs, values, and goals
5.0.4.5 Identify strategies for making decisions as a family
5.0.4.6 Develop family rituals and traditions that strengthen family relationships
5.0.4.7 Develop a plan to assure adequate time for family activities
5.0.4.8 Analyze changes that may occur in relationships over time

Supporting Concepts:

1. Characteristics and responsibilities of a healthy family
2. Use of power in family relationships
3. Making decisions as a family
4. Family traditions and rituals
5. Planning family activities
6. Changes in relationships

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

What do we mean by "healthy family relationships"? As we encounter changing social, economic, and historical conditions, the norms and expectations for family relationships undergo change. We must try to define healthy family relationships without restricting the definition to a particular kind of family or prejudging the possibility for healthy relationships in various family structures. One image that has been useful is viewing the family as the context in which one develops roots and wings. Healthy family relations promote a deep sense of connection, commitment, and caring. At the same time, they provide a context in which each family member's unique potential and individual growth is valued and promoted.

Building and Maintaining Healthy Family Relationships

Many voices seem to be joining the cry that family life is under attack and that the future of American families is bleak. However, it is clear that families always have been and will continue to be under challenges to change and adapt. Contemporary scholars are focusing on those qualities that are associated with a family's ability to cope with stress and to promote the optimal development of the family members. This module provides an overview of some of the key factors that characterize strong families. Some of these–especially communication patterns, the ability to deal effectively with conflict and stress, and the ability to balance work and family roles and responsibilities–will be considered in greater depth in subsequent modules.

From an ecological perspective, it is important to conceptualize family strengths in the context of other systems. One must avoid the tendency to look for sources of family strengths solely in the resources that individuals bring to their family life. The quality of family life is intricately interwoven with the quality of the neighborhood, the school, the work place, the health care system, and other essential service and support systems in which the family members participate.

Background

Each family is unique and each family uses different terms and phrases to describe their strengths. Nonetheless, one line of research based on 30 different studies involving over 3,000 subjects in the United States and other countries has identified six major qualities of strong families (Stinnett & DeFrain, 1989). These qualities include: commitment; appreciation and affection; positive communication; time together; spiritual well-being; and the ability to cope with stress and crisis. A different research group identified very similar characteristics of strong families grouped into three dimensions: cohesion, adaptability, and communication (Olson et al., 1983). Families that have these qualities experience comparatively high levels of satisfaction in the relationship among the adults and in the quality of the parent-child relationship. They also describe their family life as "happy."

Cohesion. Cohesion refers to a sense of being united, of being connected to one another as part of the same primary group, of sensing the interdependence in the fates of all family members. Cohesion includes the emotional and cognitive sense of commitment and the behavioral dimension of spending time together. Commitment is expressed by dependability, faithfulness, and a willingness to sacrifice for one another. Time together is expressed by spending good times together, choosing one another as companions as compared to spending time with others, and enjoying one another's company. Time together is especially important for children who see it as the most salient defining feature of a happy family. Time together doesn't have to be costly or highly planned. The critical feature is that the family members are psychologically available to one another while they are together.

Some researchers see cohesion as a curvilinear dimension with too little cohesiveness and too much cohesiveness both being problematic. Families must find an optimal level of differentiation, a concept that refers to the family's mechanisms for regulating distance. Optimal differentiation includes the ability to establish the cohesion necessary to preserve a sense of group connection and the flexibility necessary to foster individuation of the members and response to change (Allison & Sabatelli, 1988; Bowen, 1978;

Minuchin, 1974). Too little cohesiveness suggests a disinterest or neglect of family members. The people in the family are so absorbed in other activities or relationships that there is little time to build the sense of unity and commitment that are important for strong families. Too much cohesiveness suggests an overdependence, sometimes referred to as "enmeshment," in which family members are not free to develop their individuality and do not become adaptively independent.

Adaptability. Adaptability refers to the ability to make adjustments and modifications in response to changing conditions. These changing conditions include normative changes that take place as each family member matures; common life transitions such as starting school, changing jobs, moving from one town to another; changes in roles such as becoming a parent or grandparent, becoming a supervisor or manager at work, or accepting a leadership position in a club or religious organization; and changes that are a result of crisis such as the serious illness or death of a family member, a natural disaster, war, or famine.

Thus adaptability includes the ability to cope with stress and crisis as well as the ability to cope with normative life changes. It usually includes a strong sense of spiritual well-being that sustains a positive outlook as family members experience difficulties and losses. As a result of this hopefulness or optimism, strong families find the opportunities or long-term good that comes with crisis. They pull together rather than drift apart or withdraw from one another in the face of threat. And they find that by working together they bring resources and a chance for new levels of achievement that they could not accomplish alone.

Communication. Communication refers to the flow of information, opinions, emotional reactions, and ideas among the family members. Communication is both verbal and nonverbal; it can include expressions of support and expressions of disagreement; it includes both listening and speaking. Communication is the fundamental process through which family members express their appreciation and affection for one another, the primary mechanism through which conflicts are expressed and problems are resolved, and the basic means through which family members organize their time together and plan for the future. In healthy families, the individuals talk to one another about most everything–not just the big family decisions but many daily matters. And they seem to talk for fun, just as a way to spend time together. For adolescents, one of the key factors in strong parent-child relationships is the feeling of being understood. And this happens primarily through frequent opportunities for interaction about many topics, especially school, career goals, matters of ethics, family relationships, and social problems (Hunter, 1985; Robertson & Simons, 1989).

Ethnic Differences. Ethnic groups are groups of people who "share a unique social and cultural heritage that is passed on from generation to generation" (Mindel, Habenstein, & Wright, 1988, p. 5). In recent years, there has been increasing interest in the importance and vitality of ethnic group identity in American family life. There are at least three reasons for this renewed interest. First, one's ethnic identity is typically learned first within one's family. Thus any understanding of the development of ethnic identity must take into account the way that ethnicity is socialized in the family. Second, much of the content of ethnic culture that is passed on from one generation to the next is taught within the family or encouraged as the family fosters more extended ethnic education. Thus, an understanding of diversity among families

requires an analysis of how a family's unique lifestyle is shaped by its ethnic identity and the domains of family life upon which ethnicity has a bearing. Third, the traditional ethnic values that are endorsed within families lead to a new appreciation of areas of strength and special resources that help families cope and adapt to social, historical, and economic change. Areas of strength may relate to many facets of ethnicity including struggles that were overcome in the past, characteristics of kinship relationships, patterns of status and authority in the family, definitions of family roles, the particular values embraced by the ethnic group, and the ongoing need to cope with discrimination or prejudice against the group.

References

Allison, M. D., & Sabatelli, R. M. (1988). Differentiation and individuation as mediators of identity and intimacy in adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 3,* 1-16.

Bowen, M. (1978). *Family therapy in clinical practice.* New York: Jason Aaronson.

Hunter, F. T. (1985). Adolescents' perceptions of discussions with parents and friends. *Developmental Psychology, 21,* 433-440.

Mindel, C. H., Habenstein, R. W., & Wright, R., Jr. (1988). *Ethnic families in America,* (3rd edition). New York: Elsevier.

Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Olson, D. H., McCubbin, H., Barnes, H., Larsen, A., Muxen, M., & Wilson, M. (1983). *Families: what makes them work.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Robertson, J. F., & Simons, R. L. (1989). Family factors, self-esteem, and adolescent depression. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 51,* 125-138.

Stinnett, N., & DeFrain, J. (1989). The healthy family: Is it possible? *The second handbook on parent education.* New York: Academic Press.

Stinnett, N., & DeFrain, J. ,(1986). *Secrets of strong families.* Boston: Little, Brown.

Learning Activities

1. Characteristics and responsibilities of a healthy family

a. View the overhead transparency or handout **Six Secrets of Strong Families** (p. 174). As a class, identify examples of family behaviors that reflect each of the six areas. Create a display of large toy building blocks each with the name of a family strength. As the strengths are identified, build a tower with the blocks. Illustrate what would happen if any of the blocks were missing from the tower.

Discussion Questions
- *Why is each of these areas important to building a strong family?*
- *What would happen if any one of these areas was not present in a family?*
- *How do these areas reflect the meaning of family? The functions of the family?*

b. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose one of the six areas of family strengths, research the meaning of that area, and create an exhibit and/or a presentation on that family strength for the classroom. Research methods might include any or all of the ideas below. Use a variety of media to develop your final exhibit or presentation. You might include videotapes of interviews with family members, art works, writings, plays or skits, case studies of families, or reports to express your meaning of this family strength. On the day(s) of the group presentations, invite guests to class such as school administrators, parents, or community members. After you view the exhibits or listen to the presentations of other groups, react in your journal. Reflect on the meaning of that area of family strength and ways that area has played or will play a role in your family or your future family.

(1) Research on healthy families
(2) Interviews of family members
(3) Literature about families
(4) Classroom resources such as textbooks and audiovisual materials

Discussion Questions
- *What is the significance of the family strength you studied?*
- *How will you go about developing these strengths in your future family?*
- *Why is this particular strength important to individuals? Society?*

Teacher Note: The above project represents a performance task that is not only a learning activity, but an assessment opportunity as well. The students should be involved in assessing what they have learned through the completion of the exhibit or presentation. Before the project, work with students to identify criteria for assessment. Using the criteria developed in class, design a rubric for assessing the project. An example is given on **Family Strengths Project Assessment Form** (p. 175).

c. Use your school librarian as a resource for identifying short stories about families, such as those listed below. Read the stories and complete **Reviewing Literature About Families** (p. 176) to determine which of the areas of family strength are present and which are not.

(1) "I Sing the Body Electric" by Ray Bradbury
(2) "The Scarlet Ibis" by James Hurst
(3) "A Visit to Grandmother" by William M. Kelley
(4) "Why I Live at the P. O." by Eudora Welty

Discussion Questions

- *In what ways do families demonstrate areas of family strengths?*
- *Why does each family member have a responsibility to contribute to the strength of a healthy family?*
- *What happens when a family member fails to adequately contribute? How does this impact other family members?*
- *Why is it important for family members to communicate their needs, values, and goals to other family members?*

d. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a family counselor to class to discuss the diversity of families and the variety of ways that family strengths can take shape in different family settings. Explore the concept that no families are perfect, but strong families exhibit certain characteristics more consistently than troubled families.

e. Strong families have a sense of purpose and direction, or a vision of what they would like their family to be like. Read the examples below and explain what is important to each family. Identify the consequences of these visions of family for the family members and society. Write an entry in your reflection journal that identifies words, phrases, or descriptions that are part of your vision for your future family. Illustrate your vision with a collage, drawing, videotape, or other medium of expression. In pairs, share the representation of your vision for your future family. Display the representations in the classroom.

(1) The Loving Family. We want our children to grow up with a firm sense of family, to enjoy the closeness and stability of being in a family so that when they're grown, they will want to have a loving relationship of their own. We spend time together as a family, having fun and learning about each other.
(2) The Giving Family. We hope that our family sees that the most important thing is giving of yourselves to others and leaving the world a better place. We encourage each family member to share his or her talents with others, and we provide role models by volunteering.
(3) The Nurturing Family. We want to encourage our family members' sense of curiosity and wonder. We want them to have time to explore the world and other cultures.

(4) The Encouraging Family. We want to encourage family members to be independent, to use their own minds and be leaders. We help family members trust their own judgment.
(5) The Achieving Family. We want family members to learn as much as they can. If they work hard enough, we believe our family members can do anything. We encourage children to tackle tasks with energy and enthusiasm, and become lifelong learners.

Source: A. Cassidy. The Happy Family: How to Make it Yours, *Family Circle*, February 2, 1993.

Discussion Questions
- *Why is it important for families to have a sense of purpose or direction?*
- *How do these visions of family reflect the areas of family strengths?*
- *How might these examples inspire your vision of your future family?*

Teacher Note: Depending on the needs of the students in your class, you may wish to add the activity below, which focuses on strengthening different types of families. This activity is identified as a cooperative learning activity, but could also be an Action Project.

f. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose one of the types of families listed below and research specific strategies for strengthening relationships in that type of family. Identify challenges, needs, and resources unique to that type of family and how these impact on each area related to family strengths. Present your findings to the class.

(1) Single parent families
(2) Blended families
(3) Extended families
(4) Adoptive families
(5) Foster families

g. **Action Project:** Keep a journal recording evidence of family strengths in your own family or a family that you know well. Be sure to get permission to make and record your observations. After examining your record of observations, complete **Assessing Family Strengths** (p. 177). Share your findings with family members. If you have observed your own family, set goals for strengthening your family in one of the six areas. Identify activities related to the goal and keep a record of your progress.

h. **Action Project:** Select one or more of the activities below to strengthen your family or create your own idea for an activity that will contribute to strengthening your family. Following your activity, interview family members to determine the results of your actions. Record your findings in a written report.

(1) Write a letter of appreciation to a family member for something they have done for you.
(2) Buy an address and reminder book. Record birthdays, anniversaries, and special events of family members. Budget time to mail cards, write notes, or plan special dinners or celebrations.
(3) Plan and carry out a family celebration.

i. **FHA/HERO:** Design a place mat or a pamphlet to be distributed in a place such as a local restaurant, library, or community center. Feature the areas of family strengths and ways to go about strengthening family relationships.

j. **FHA/HERO:** Hold a family night. Rent a movie that deals with commitment in families such as On Golden Pond, Fiddler on the Roof, or Our Town, and invite family members to watch the movie with you. Serve refreshments. Following the movie, lead a discussion about the importance of commitment to family life.

2. Use of power in family relationships

a. Using resources, define *power*. Watch television programs about families and record examples of situations in which power is used. Share your examples with the class and develop a chart that lists the situation in the first column, the person in the family who holds the power in that situation in the second column, and the consequences of the way power is used in that situation in the third column.

Discussion Questions
- *Who holds the power in each of the examples you identified? Why does that person hold the power?*
- *What are the short-term and long-term consequences of the way power is used in each situation?*
- *How can power be both positive and negative?*
- *How should power be used in strong families?*

b. Collect comic strips that illustrate the use of power in families. In cooperative learning groups, choose several of the comic strips as well as one of the case studies below. Explain how power is being used in each situation and the short-term and long-term consequences of the way power is being used. Share your findings with the class and discuss how the situations could be changed to result in more positive uses of power.

(1) Susan's family is making plans to go on vacation. Her father loves to go to Civil War battlefields but the rest of the family is getting tired of the same old thing. Susan would love to go to the beach. Her father claims that it is his money and he will make the decisions.
(2) Rick, the youngest of the family of four, is not happy with anything his mother makes for dinner. Ever. Each night at the table he fusses and complains until his mother fixes him something he likes.
(3) Mary enjoys being very active in after school projects. Her mother complains that Mary is never home, and that her involvement is an indication that Mary does not like being home. Mary is afraid she is hurting her mother's feelings. She is considering giving up the activities.
(4) Bob wants to go out on Friday night with his friends but knows he has a family commitment the same night. He first approaches his mother and asks if he can miss his grandmother's birthday party and make his own plans. He is told no. Since he has failed with his mom, he goes to his stepfather knowing he is less comfortable with saying no.

c. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook about how you have experienced the use of power in family relationships.

(1) How does it feel to experience power used in positive ways? Negative ways?
(2) What were the consequences of the situations you experienced?
(3) What goals do you have as to how power will be used in your future family?
(4) What attitudes and skills will you need to carry out those goals?

3. Making decisions as a family

a. Complete **My Family's Problem-Solving Profile** (p. 178). Make a list of the consequences of using reasoning and nonreasoning to make decisions in a family. Review the characteristics of reasoning identified on **Comparing Reasoning and Nonreasoning** (p. 27).

Discussion Questions
- *Why is it important for families to use reasoning when making decisions?*
- *What happens when family members make decisions independently without consulting other family members?*
- *How does using a reasoning approach contribute to being a strong family?*

b. In pairs, identify situations in which families would need to make a decision. Share these situations with the class. Identify the similarities and differences between making decisions as a family and making decisions as an individual. Read **Guidelines for Family Meetings** (p. 179). Explain how family meetings can be used as a tool to enhance family decision making.

Discussion Questions

- *Are the guidelines identified on the handout guidelines you would use for family meetings in your present or future family? Why or why not?*
- *Who should establish guidelines for family meetings?*
- *How might the guidelines vary from family to family?*

c. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose a situation from **Family Scenarios** (p. 180). Choose family roles appropriate for the situation chosen and conduct a family meeting to resolve the problem. Use the **Practical Family Problems Think Sheet** (p. 29) to choose a solution that is best for the family. Present your decision to the class, justify your decision, and explain how the family meeting you conducted represented effective family decision making.

Discussion Questions

- *Why should families hold meetings?*
- *How can a family meeting help achieve a family's purpose and goals?*
- *How can a family meeting contribute to the well-being of all family members?*
- *What are the most important guidelines in conducting a family meeting?*

d. **FHA/HERO:** Identify a situation in which the chapter may need to hold a meeting to make a decision. Explain how the chapter could use the rules of parliamentary procedure to allow all chapter members to have a say in making the decision. Conduct a meeting using the appropriate procedures. Compare your chapter meeting to a family meeting. Identify similarities and differences.

e. **Action Project:** Conduct a meeting or series of meetings in your own family for the purpose of making a family decision. Record the events of the meetings and the outcomes of your family's decision. Interview family members to determine how they felt about the meeting. Summarize your observations in a written report.

4. Family traditions and rituals

a. Use classroom resources to define *traditions* and *rituals* in relation to families and to identify research about why traditions and rituals are important to strengthening families. Relate your definition and findings to the descriptors listed below. Create and list examples of various traditions and rituals using personal experiences and observations of families. Design a bulletin board featuring the various activities that families do that represent traditions and rituals.

(1) Represent habits or activities developed within a family
(2) Contribute a sense of history or joy to a family
(3) Are often part of holidays

(4) Involve all members of a family
(5) Provide continuity to a family's year-to-year calendar

Discussion Questions
- *How do traditions and rituals help to strengthen families?*
- *What are the consequences of not having traditions and rituals in families?*
- *Which family traditions and rituals would you like to make part of your future family?*

b. Complete **Precious Memories** (p. 181).

Teacher Note: If many of your students' experiences are in troubled families, the **Precious Memories** (p. 181) activity may be inappropriate. The following activity focuses on creating family traditions and rituals for a future family and many be substituted for the previous activity.

c. In cooperative learning groups, create a new tradition or ritual for a family. Describe the activity by outlining who will be involved, what will be done, when it will occur, where it will occur, how it could be planned, and why it would be important as a family tradition. Form new groups with each member having created a different tradition or ritual. Share the traditions and rituals developed and identify similarities and differences between them.

d. **FHA/HERO**: Choose one or more ethnic groups represented in your community and research family traditions and rituals typical to each group. Use library resources and interviews with family members. Create a school display highlighting what you have learned entitled, "Families: A Strong Tradition."

e. **Action Project:** Interview several people from different families about the traditions and rituals in their family. Record their favorite traditions and ask them to reflect on the changes that have occurred in the tradition over time. Record your findings in a written report and make a presentation to the class.

f. **Action Project:** Plan and carry out a family tradition or ritual activity in your family. Use the planning process to plan the details of the activity. Keep a journal of the your activities, including a log of your time. Following the activity, interview family members to determine their reaction to the traditions or ritual experience. Summarize in a written report.

g. **FHA/HERO:** Develop a list of rituals involved in the FHA/HERO organization, such as the installation ceremony, rewards banquet, special recurring events at Regional Rally or State Conference. Discuss the significance of each tradition or ritual.

h. **Action Project:** Develop a calendar for use by family members that lists traditional holidays and includes a record of family birthdays, holidays, family nights, and other special family events.

5. Planning family activities

a. Complete **Things I Like To Do** (p. 182). In pairs, share activities that you enjoy and the positive influence of spending time together with your family doing the things that you enjoy.

b. In small groups, research family activities available in your community. Choose one of the categories of activities below and create a display of possible activities in that category. Provide cost, if applicable, and names, addresses, and phone numbers of community resources related to that activity.

(1) Low cost activities to do at home
(2) Low cost entertainment ideas
(3) Sports or physical activities
(4) One-day trips
(5) Educational activities

Teacher Note: Modify the categories of family activities in the above activity to reflect the cultural and socioeconomic diversity in your school community.

c. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose a specific simulated family situation for your group (use family situations used in previous learning activities or create a new family situation). As a simulated family, use the planning process to develop a plan to spend time together as a family. Chart activities you believe your simulated family would enjoy and a plan for accomplishing those activities together. Share your plan with the class.

Discussion Questions

- *What are the short-term and long-term consequences of spending time with family members?*
- *Why is it sometimes difficult for families to find time to spend together?*
- *What are some of the most logical times families could spend together?*
- *Which types of activities take a lot of planning? Very little planning? Why?*
- *What skills do you need to plan and spend time together as a family?*

6. Changes in relationships

a. Read the children's story, *I'll Love You Forever,* by Robert Munsch. Discuss the differences in family relationships over the life cycle. Identify ways that the roles the characters play in this story relate to your own life and the life of your family members.

Discussion Questions
- *What roles do the characters play in the story?*
- *How do the roles change over time?*
- *What responsibilities do you feel to maintain family relationships as you grow older?*
- *What skills do you need to cope with these changes in family relationships?*

b. In small groups, choose two concurrent stages of the family life cycle and explain how family roles and relationships might be similar and different between the two stages. Write your responses on a large piece of newsprint. Post the responses of all groups around the classroom.

Discussion Questions
- *Which family life cycle stages seem to reflect the most changes? Least changes? Why?*
- *How can families be prepared for these changes?*
- *What other family events or experiences might cause change in family roles and relationships?*

c. Gather information about the year in which you were born, such as news headlines, names of elected officials, popular songs, television shows or movies, and community characteristics. Display in the classroom. Explain how things have changed for your family since you were born.

Discussion Questions
- *How has the world changed since you were born?*
- *How have these changes impacted family roles and relationships?*
- *How have the relationships in your family changed since you were born?*

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Identify at least three characteristics of families who strive to meet the needs of all family members.
2. Given simulated situations, identify rights, responsibilities, and expectations of each family member.
3. Given case studies, analyze implications of power and authority within relationships by describing the consequences of the way power and authority is used in each situation.
4. Given simulated family situations, analyze the responsibility and ability of each family member to establish and communicate personal and family needs, values, and goals.
5. Identify at least three strategies for making decisions as a family.
6. Develop at least three family rituals and traditions that strengthen family relationships.
7. Given simulated family situations, develop a plan to assure adequate time for family activities.
8. Analyze changes that may occur in relationships over time by describing changes in relation to the family life cycle.

Classroom Experiences

1. In cooperative learning groups, choose one of the areas of family strengths and research the meaning of that strength. Create an exhibit or presentation on that family strength for the classroom.
2. Read short stories and analyze each story to determine which of the six areas of family strengths are present and which are not.
3. In cooperative learning groups, choose comic strips and case studies. Explain the type of power being used in each situation and the short-term and long-term consequences of the way power is being used. Share your findings with the class and discuss how the situations could be changed to result in more positive uses of power.
4. In cooperative learning groups, choose a family situation and assign family roles appropriate for the situation. Conduct a family meeting to resolve the problem. Use the practical problem-solving process to choose a solution that is best for the family. Present your decision to the class, justify your decision, and explain how the family meeting you conducted represented effective family decision making.

5. In cooperative learning groups, create a new tradition or ritual for a family. Describe the activity by outlining who will be involved, what will be done, when it will occur, where it will occur, how it could be planned, and why it would be important as a family tradition.

6. In small groups, research family activities available in your community. Create a display of possible activities. Provide cost, if applicable, and names, addresses, and phone numbers of community resources related to that activity.

7. In cooperative learning groups, choose a specific simulated family situation for your group. As a simulated family, use the planning process to develop a plan to spend time together as a family. Chart activities you believe your simulated family would enjoy, and a plan for accomplishing those activities together. Share your plan with the class.

Application to Real-life Settings

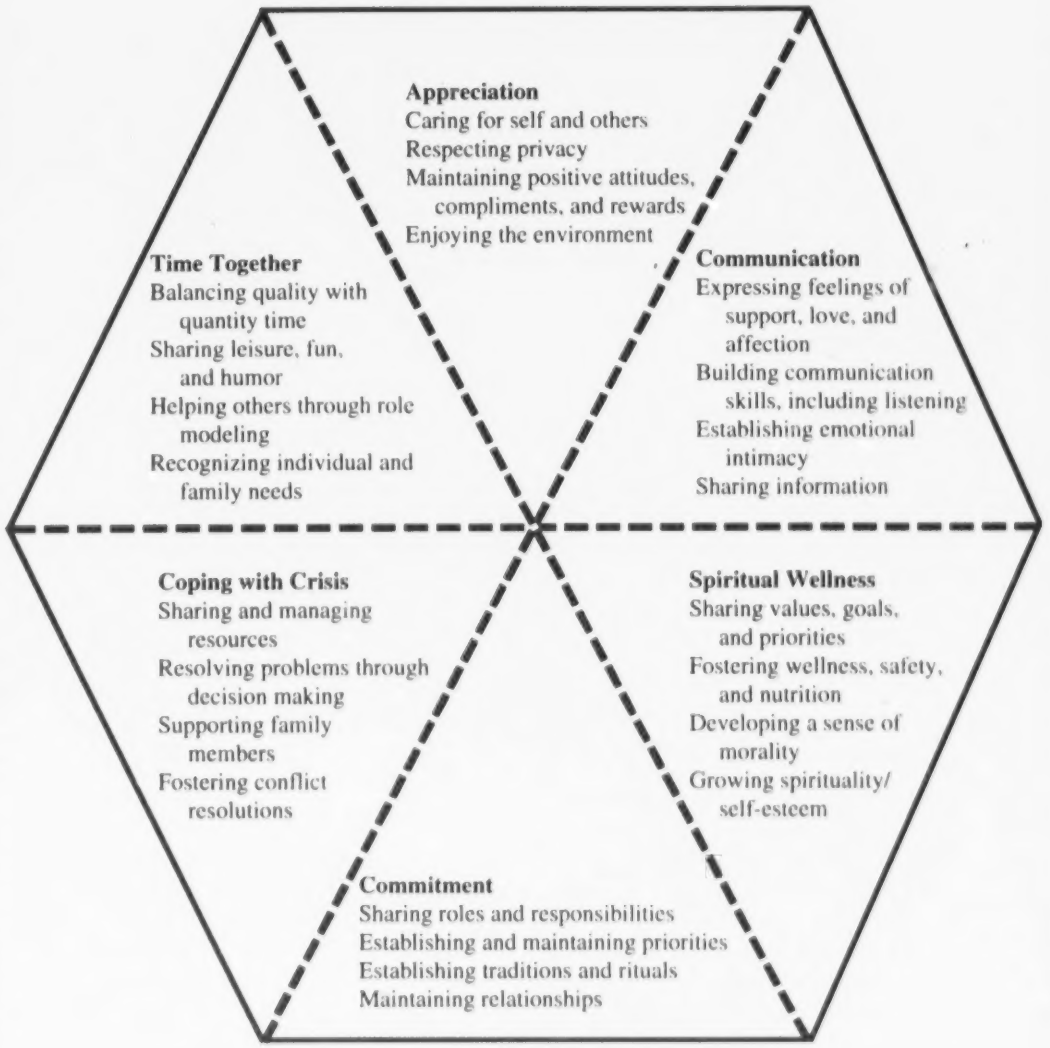
1. Select activities to strengthen your family. Following your activities, interview family members to determine the results of your actions. Record your findings in a written report.

2. Conduct a meeting or series of meetings in your own family for the purpose of making a family decision. Record the events of the meetings and the outcomes of your family's decision. Interview family members to determine how they felt about the meeting. Summarize your observations in a written report.

3. Interview several people from different families about the traditions and rituals in their family.. Record their favorite traditions and ask them to reflect on the changes that have occurred in the traditions over time. Record your findings in a written report and make a presentation to the class.

4. Plan and carry out a family tradition or ritual activity in your family. Use the planning process to plan the details of the activity. Keep a journal of the your activities, including a log of your time. Following the activity, interview family members to determine their reaction to the tradition or ritual experience. Summarize in a written report.

Six Secrets of Strong Families



Source: Dr. Nickolas Stinnett, University of Alabama, and Dr. John DeFrain, University of Nebraska.

Family Strengths Project Assessment Form

Name _____

Names of Other Group Members _____

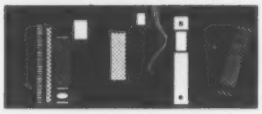
_____

For each of the criteria listed below, assign a value based on how your group met that criteria in the Family Strengths Project. Compare your assessment with those of other group members. Decide on a final assessment rating as a group. On the back of this page, answer the following questions.

- *What did we learn from this project?*
- *How will what we learned influence the actions we take as family members?*

Criteria	Assessment Ratings 3	2	1
References Rating _____ X 5 = _____	Used a wide variety of authoritative sources and cited them accurately. Sources have been evaluated as highly valid and reliable.	A few authoritative sources, cited with some degree of accuracy. Some sources have been evaluated as highly valid and reliable.	Did not use a variety of authoritative sources. Reliability of some sources was questionable.
Substance Rating _____ X 5 = _____	Included substantive, factual information about an area of family strength. Material was reflective, thoughtful, and showed depth.	Most information was substantive and factual Material was somewhat reflective and thoughtful, but could be improved.	Lacked factual, substantive information. Material showed little depth.
Originality Rating _____ X 5= _____	A variety of original research methods used. Material presented in creative ways using a variety of media.	A few original research methods used. Material presented in somewhat creative ways but could be improved.	No variety in research methods used. Lack of creativity in presentation.
Cooperation Rating _____ X 5= _____	Committed to the achievement of group goals. Each member worked to achieve goals. Assessed progress and adjusted accordingly.	Completed assignment as a result of the efforts of a few group members. Lacked interaction between group members. Lacked group cohesion.	No commitment to group goals. Task left unfinished. Did not execute duties of assigned role.

_____ **Total Points** (60 possible)



Reviewing Literature About Families

Read three short stories and record the title and author of each short story. Beside each of the six family strengths listed in the chart below, write an example of how that strength was demonstrated in the stories you read. Then given an example of how that trait was neglected in a family situation in one of the stories you read. In the final column, identify the short-term and long-term effects of the presence or absence of that trait in the stories.

Short Story Title _____ Author _____

Short Story Title _____ Author _____

Short Story Title _____ Author _____

	Examples	Effects
1. Commitment		
2. Appreciation		
3. Time Together		
4. Communication		
5. Spiritual Well-Being		
6. Coping with Stress and Crisis		

Assessing Family Strengths

Place a check mark (✓) beside those behaviors that you observe under each category of family strengths. Then assign an overall rating to each of the six areas.

Appreciation and Affection

_____Kindness
_____Caring for each other
_____Respect for each other
_____Respect for individuality
_____Tolerance
_____Physical and emotional affection
_____Playfulness
_____Humor
_____Put-downs and sarcasm are rare
_____Family members are committed to helping enhance each other's self esteem
_____A feeling of security
_____Safety
_____People genuinely like each other, and like being with each other

Overall rating of appreciation and affection in the family: _____

Time Together

_____Good things take time, and we take time to be with each other in our family
_____We share quality time, and in great quantity
_____Enjoying each other's company
_____Serendipitous (unplanned, spontaneous) good times
_____Simple, inexpensive good times

Overall rating of the time we share together in the family:_____

The Ability to Cope with Stress and Crisis

_____Sharing both resources and feelings
_____Understanding each other
_____Helping each other
_____Forgiveness
_____Seeing a crisis as both a challenge and an opportunity
_____Growing through crises together
_____Humor
_____Patience
_____Resilience (the ability to "hang in there")

Overall rating of the family's ability to cope with stress and crisis:_____

Spiritual Well-Being

_____Happiness
_____Optimism
_____Hope
_____Faith
_____Mental health
_____A functional religion or set of shared ethical values that guides family members through life's challenges
_____Oneness with God
_____Oneness with the world
_____Oneness with humankind
_____Supportive extended family members
_____A network of genuine family friends
_____Involvement in the community, and support from the community

Overall rating of spiritual well-being in the family: _____

Positive Communication

_____Open, straightforward
_____Discussion rather than lectures
_____Generally positive
_____Cooperative, not competitive
_____Non-blaming
_____A few squabbles occur, but generally harmonious
_____Consensus building, rather than winners and losers
_____Compromise
_____Agreeing to disagree on occasion
_____Acceptance of the notion that differences can be a strength in the family, and that everyone does not have to be the same

Overall rating of positive communication in the family:_____

Commitment

_____Trust
_____Honesty
_____Dependability
_____Fidelity
_____Faithfulness
_____"We are one"
_____Sacrifice
_____Sharing

Overall rating of commitment in the family:_____

Source: Dr. Nickolas Stinnett, University of Alabama, and Dr. John DeFrain, University of Nebraska.

My Family's Problem-Solving Profile

What does your family do when faced with a practical problem? Place a check mark (✓) in front of those items that describe the way your family solves problems.

_____ 1. We take time to talk together and think through problems before deciding on a solution.
_____ 2. We try not to think about problems, but just do the first thing that comes to mind when solving them.
_____ 3. We consider the context of the problem, several choices, and the consequences of those choices before solving the problem.
_____ 4. We usually ignore problems and hope they go away.
_____ 5. We try to get accurate, reliable information before solving the problem.
_____ 6. When solving problems, we usually just do whatever we feel like, without consulting other members of the family.
_____ 7. We consider the values involved in the situation and the consequences of those values for ourselves and others.
_____ 8. We consider the values, needs, and feelings of everyone involved in the problem before choosing a solution.
_____ 9. We choose solutions that have the most positive consequences for ourselves and others.
_____10. We choose solutions that promote the well-being of ourselves and others.
_____11. We choose solutions that are workable for the short-term and long-term situations.

Based on your responses to the above items, decide which of the following problem-solving profiles best describes your family's approach:

Problem-Solving Profile A: A Nonreasoning Approach

A nonreasoning approach can take several forms. Nonreasoners might avoid or ignore problems. Other nonreasoning approaches include blindly accepting a solution, choosing a solution on impulse, choosing a solution out of habit, or solving the problem just like others have solved it. Item 2, 4, and 6 reflect a nonreasoning approach.

Problem-Solving Profile B: A Reasoning Approach

A reasoning approach means giving the problem some careful thought as a family. Reasoners usually consider several alternatives and the consequences of those alternatives. The reasoning approach includes using factual information and value information to solve the problem. The final solution is justified with criteria, and good reasons are given for the choice. Items 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 reflect a reasoning approach.

What would your family need to change about their problem-solving behavior to make the best decisions for yourselves and others? Write three goals to help your family become better problem solvers.

1.

2.

3.

Guidelines for Family Meetings

Strong families make decisions together. Family meetings can be used to make decisions about problems, figure out how to share family responsibilities, or to plan family activities. Family meetings can be also be used to renew commitment to the family. Ask, "How are we doing as a family? What needs to be changed?"

Some possible guidelines for family meetings. . .

- Set a regularly scheduled time for family meetings, preferably when all family members can attend.

- Don't let family meetings go too long. For a family with small children, meetings should be about 20 to 30 minutes in length. If most children in the family are older, about 1 hour.
- Share meeting responsibilities, letting different family members be the meeting chairperson.

- Keep some type of record of your meetings on a family calendar or in a notebook. Record your plans of action and post them as a reminder.
- Allow family members to put items they wish to discuss on the agenda.
- Though these sessions are a great time to problem solve, share schedules, or decide how to get household tasks done, have some fun, too. Plan a family outing or vacation.
- Encourage all family members to participate.
- Use good communication skills.

- Always end with something that the family enjoys, like a family hug, a game that includes family members, or a bowl of popcorn enjoyed together.

Family Scenarios

1

Tina Traveler has been offered another promotion. To accept the new position, she would have to move her family from Akron, Ohio to Atlanta, Georgia. This would be the twelfth move for Ms. Traveler and her husband in their 18 years of marriage. They have three boys, Blake, 12; David, 14; and Randy, 7. The oldest of their three children, Blake, has already attended eight different schools. The boys feel that every time they get settled in a school, it's time to move again. Only the seven-year-old son is excited about moving to a new place. The Travelers depend on Tina's salary and she feels refusing the promotion might jeopardize her job. What should the Travelers do?

2

Grandpa Wilson has suffered a stroke that has made it impossible for him to live alone. Tom and Sally Wilson have three small children and have just moved into a three-bedroom two-story home about 120 miles away. Grandpa Wilson has a small savings. Tom and Sally have very little savings after using all their extra money on a down payment for the house. What will the Wilsons do?

3

Thelma is 21 and has just lost her job. She has asked to move back in with her mother, who is divorced and her two sisters, both teenagers still in high school. Recently her mother moved to a smaller apartment and space is limited. What should Thelma's family do?

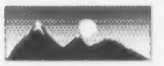
4

The Thackerys are a family of three: an eight-year-old boy, a twelve year-old-girl, and their father. Mr. Thackery just received a bonus at work and he feels it is enough for the three of them to take a vacation for a week this summer. What should the Thackerys do for the vacation?

5

Marty and his wife have just married. She has two teenage girls from a previous marriage. Marty is just getting to know them. Marty has been used to living in a small apartment by himself and is a bit overwhelmed about sharing a house with his wife and two teenage stepdaughters. Marty's wife would like for the family to develop a plan to share household responsibilities. How should Marty's family develop this plan?

Precious Memories



In the space below, record two memories of family traditions you have experienced in your family. Attach pictures or momentos that recorded the experience. Interview other family members who were present and record their impressions of that tradition. Explain why that experience was important to your family.

Example	Your Impression	Impression of Other Family Members

Example	Your Impression	Impression of Other Family Members

Things I Like To Do

List 15 of your favorite activities and write the names of family members at the top of each column. Place a check mark (✓) in the column under family members' names to indicate which family members enjoy each of the activities you have identified. Place a (*) beside those items that are free or low cost.

Activity	Family Member:	Family Member:	Family Member:
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			

Based on the above information, write three activities you and your family might enjoy doing together.

1.

2.

3.

Family Relations

Developing Family Communication Patterns

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about family communication?

Competency 5.0.5: Develop communication patterns that enhance family relationships

Competency Builders:

5.0.5.1 Recognize importance of interpersonal communication skills in family life
5.0.5.2 Distinguish between effective and ineffective communication in families
5.0.5.3 Identify barriers to communication in families
5.0.5.4 Recognize developmental and individual differences in communication skills among family members
5.0.5.5 Practice communication skills (including listening and questioning) that encourage constructive family interaction
5.0.5.6 Respect rights, feelings, and needs of family members
5.0.5.7 Recognize appropriate times, settings, and circumstances to communicate with family members

Supporting Concepts:

1. Importance of communication in family life
2. Effective and ineffective communication
3. Constructive communication strategies
4. Barriers to communication
5. Developmental and individual differences in communication
6. Appropriate times, settings, and circumstances for communication

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

Effective communication is one of the major areas identified as a characteristic of strong families (Stinnett & DeFrain, 1989). Families are interactive groups that form bonds of affection, mutual regard, and commitment largely through communication. The way individual members of families come to define themselves and the way they feel about other members of the family emerge largely from the way they perceive and interpret the content and tone of interactions directed to them and about them.

The capacity for symbolic communication among humans appears to be genetically based. At the same time, communication is, by its vary nature, a social behavior, one that requires stimulation and support

from others. It provides a sense of connection. Good communication seems necessary to maintaining positive mental health–as it plays such a key role in establishing and maintaining intimate relations, expressing personal thoughts and feelings so they can be understood by others, and identifying and resolving conflicts. Communicative competence can be enhanced through direct teaching as well as by observation and imitation. Much of the educative process is, in one way or another, a process of enhancing communication–identifying new concepts, giving words to ideas, linking ideas into broader categories, evaluating and analyzing information, and developing communicative skills such as speaking, reading, and listening. Thus, we have every reason to be optimistic that family members can develop new strategies to improve their communication and thereby enhance the quality of their relationships.

Background

The meaning of effective communication. Communication means the transmission or interchange of thoughts, feelings, opinions, and information between a sender and a receiver. Communication can take place through a variety of verbal and nonverbal channels including words, facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, written messages, signs, and symbols. Communicative competence or effective communication can be defined as the clarity with which the sender conveys the message so that the receiver accurately understands the intended meaning. In face-to-face communication, there are many opportunities to determine whether the message was accurately interpreted. The receiver may say, "What did you say?" or give a puzzled look. Then the sender may try again, rephrasing the message, repeating it more slowly, or more loudly.

The development of communicative competence. The process of learning to be an effective communication partner begins in infancy. Observations of mothers and their infants show that among positively attached dyads, the mother and infant develop a coordinated cycle of interactions. These cycles show patterns of engagement when mothers and infants are involved in the same type of behavior, such as playing, cooing, smiling, or fussing and comforting. In addition, the mothers seem to be sensitive to cycles of attention and withdrawal. When the infant is alert and paying attention to the mother, the mother is involved and reciprocates the infant's behaviors. But when the infant shows signs of fatigue and withdraws from the interaction, the mother also withdraws, allowing the baby to rest before engaging in a new interaction. Over time, communication between mothers and their infants becomes increasingly coordinated. When the interaction falls into a phase of mismatch, where, for example, the mother is playful but the baby is fussy, the mother knows how to repair the interaction, by either withdrawing, or trying to soothe and comfort the baby. Thus babies and their mothers cycle through frequent points of coordination followed by effective efforts at repair or rest. Over time, in this context babies learn what it feels like to be engaged in shared "conversations" that are satisfying, and they become hopeful that failed communications can be repaired (Tronick & Cohn, 1989; Rutter, 1990).

Language learning takes place within the social environment of the family (Snow, 1984). First words are often utterances that would not be found in the dictionary, but that have shared meaning between an infant and a caregiver. These single word utterances accompanied by certain gestures, actions, vocal intonations, or emotions are called holophrases. When the baby says, "Ba ba," while pointing to the refrigerator, she

means "juice." But when she says, "Ba ba," in a whining voice while lying in bed, she means that she wants her pacifier. The motivation to increase one's vocabulary and to engage in vocal speech is intimately linked to the realization that this is an effective means of getting one's needs met.

As language learning continues, parents and older siblings play a critical part in expanding a child's vocabulary, exposing the child to the unique expressions and sounds of the spoken language, and engaging the child in conversations as a communication partner. Numerous studies have found that children's social and intellectual development are fostered when they have many opportunities to engage in conversation with live, interactive language partners (White, Kaban, & Attanucci, 1979; Bates, Bretherton, & Snyder, 1988).

Just as communication in infancy involves coordination, so communication with toddlers and preschoolers involves a process of mutual regulation sometimes called scaffolding (Nelson, 1981). Children try to match the verbal expressions used by adults by imitating their words and tone of voice. At the same time, caregivers try to understand the young child's expressions and advance these expressions. They may repeat a child's expressions to make sure they understand. They may ask the child to elaborate on the expression–"Oh, that is a pretty picture. Tell me more about it." Or they may elaborate on the expression themselves—"Yes, I see the dog. He has a bright black coat and his tail is wagging very fast." All these strategies help children expand their communicative competence by making their expressions clearer, adding to their vocabulary, or learning new ways to engage in continuing conversations.

Most parents do not interact with children primarily for the purpose of teaching them language. Language is a cultural tool, a means for socializing and educating children; it is one of the most powerful cultural inventions for creating a sense of group identity and for passing on the mythology, wisdom, and values of the culture from one generation to the next. Language is a part of the psychosocial environment. Competence in the use of language solidifies the young child's membership in the immediate family and in the larger cultural group (Rogoff & Morelli, 1989). Beyond the formal elements of vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing, language development plays a critical role in subsequent social and emotional development. It is primarily through the quality of one's spoken language that one achieves the levels of disclosure that sustain significant personal relationships. Language also serves as a mechanism for resolving conflicts and for building a sense of cohesiveness within groups, whether of friends, coworkers, or family members (Newman & Newman, 1995).

The family's communication environment. Most families can be characterized by their communicative environment. This environment is established by the quantity and quality of interactions that take place between adults in the family and by the stated or unstated rules that govern interactions. These rules often include how open or closed the family members are about expressing feelings, how they express affection and support for one another, how much freedom for disagreement is allowed between the adults and between adults and children (Barnes & Olson, 1985).

Marriage partners who have a high level of satisfaction in their relationship typically report frequent, pleasurable interactions and a high degree of disclosure. Emotional expressiveness, especially among husbands, and the lack of ambivalence about expressing one's feelings are an important element in the

communication process, particularly among white, middle-class American families (King, 1993). In contrast, a decline in pleasurable interactions and an absence of communication of any kind, even conflicts, are associated with a high probability of divorce (Noller, 1980).

Differences in communication style between men and women. Men and women typically view the communicative process differently. In one analysis, four types of communicative styles between husbands and wives were described:

- Conventional interactions that gloss over issues. Partners maintain the interaction but do not express much emotional commitment or explore the other person's views.
- Controlling interactions that express the person's views quite clearly but do not take the other person's perspective into account.
- Speculative interactions that are guarded. Partners explore the other person's point of view but do not fully reveal their own position.
- Contactful interactions that are open to the other person's point of view and also clearly express the speaker's own position.

Husbands and wives agreed that the contactful style was most desirable and the controlling style least desirable. However, wives preferred fewer controlling interactions from their husbands than the husbands preferred for themselves. Wives also preferred more contactful interactions from their husbands than their husbands preferred for themselves. Wives perceived their husbands as being more conventional, more controlling, and less contactful than they saw themselves. In general, wives expressed the view that their husbands were less likely to use the modes of interaction that they most preferred and more likely to use the modes of interaction they least preferred. Husbands did not express these same dissatisfactions about their wives' styles of communication (Hawkins, Weisberg, & Ray, 1980).

Other research on couple communication finds that wives tend to want greater levels of disclosure and emotional expression in their marriage than their husbands who tend to be satisfied with the level of intimacy in their communications. This difference in the desire for and competence in verbal expressions of intimacy between men and women is clearly linked to differences in socialization practices for males and females. Although it is somewhat of an overgeneralization, the study of men and women in relationships suggests that women are more concerned with establishing intimacy and closeness whereas men are concerned with preserving independence and status (Tannen, 1990). Women tend to be more aware of their feelings and how to express them. They use communications about feelings to help build connections with others, to monitor how others are reacting to them, and to maintain positive links in relationships. Men tend to be socialized to ignore their feelings and to restrict communication about feelings. They are more likely to convey their affection and support through actions, like buying a gift, doing a favor, and, especially through sexually intimate actions (Cancian, 1985; Rubin, 1983). It takes work for couples to establish a level of communication in which the partners both feel adequate emotional closeness and mutual validation.

Barriers to effective communication. Many families find it difficult to sustain effective communication. In families that communicate positively, individuals take time to talk to one another. When family members are so distracted or busy with other responsibilities that they do not have time to talk, it is

difficult to experience effective communication. This seems like a simple problem. However, many adolescents report that they have few moments of unstructured conversation with their parents. The parents may be working, the adolescents have many activities and responsibilities after school, and, in fact, there may be only a few waking hours each day when all the members of the family are in the house at the same time.

Positive communication involves conveying respect and interest in one another. Some families have difficulty in this area. Their interactions are sarcastic or destructive. Family members continuously criticize or undercut one another. In some families, one person in particular becomes the target or scapegoat, always being blamed for everything that goes wrong in the family. In some families, individuals send mixed or double messages that convey contradictory information. A father may say he is very interested in hearing his son's composition, but then pick up a magazine and start reading it while the son is reading the composition aloud. A husband seems to be feeling very hurt and disappointed, but when his wife asks what is bothering him he says, "Nothing."

Families who experience positive communication do not always agree with one another. In fact, families that promote the optimal development of each person are likely to experience times when family members have different points of view and disagree. However, these families understand that there is an appropriate role for conflict and that it is not necessary or healthy to hide one's differences. When families have a spoken or unspoken rule against expressing anger or differences, many of these differences are channeled into ineffective or even destructive directions. Family members can become depressed and withdrawn as a result of holding in their angry feelings. Other outlets for unexpressed anger appear to be nagging, sarcasm, or constant criticism about small things. The person who is the target of this nagging gets angry, but when he or she says something, the other person accuses the person of being overly sensitive and of making a big deal out of nothing. A third destructive outlet is displacement. Rather than express anger at a person directly, a family member directs anger toward another member of the family or toward someone outside the family. A woman may be very angry at her husband because he is being unfaithful, but she expresses her anger by being very tense with her son and beating him when he misbehaves.

At the other extreme are those families that cannot seem to bring the expression of conflict or anger to a close. One of the big differences between couples who are satisfied in their relationship and those who are not is the amount of negative communication among the latter. Satisfied couples have predominantly positive interactions. When they disagree or have conflicts, they find ways to bring the conflict to a close. Dissatisfied couples seem to find their conflicts escalating rather rapidly so that they arrive at a high level of hostility and have trouble backing off or finding a way to diffuse the tension (Gottman & Levenson, 1986).

Finally, individuals who have lived together for a long time may find that effective communication is disrupted by habits that are no longer appropriate. Couples find comfortable ways to stay in touch with each other, they express little phrases or ask each other stock questions, almost knowing in advance how the other person is going to answer. Similarly, parents have certain strategies for interacting with their children that feel comfortable and where the interactions are predictable. But as individuals change and

experience new things, as their needs for intimacy and disclosure in a relationship change, or as their capacity for communication expands, these habits are no longer adequate to preserve authentic relationships. Family members may have to experience some anxiety as they give up familiar communication rituals in order to arrive at new patterns of interaction that are more appropriate to the needs and competencies of the communication partners.

References

Barnes, H. L., & Olson, D. H. (1985). Parent-adolescent communication and the circumplex model. *Child Development, 56*, 438-447.

Bates, E., Bretherton, I., & Snyder, L. (1988). *From first words to grammar.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cancian, F. M. (1985). Gender politics: Love and power in the private and public spheres. In A. S. Rossi (Ed.). *Gender and the life course.* New York: Aldine.

Gottman, J. M., & Levenson, R. W. (1986). Assessing the role of emotion in marriage. *Behavioral Assessment, 8*, 31-48.

Hawkins, J. L., Weisberg, C., & Ray, D. W. (1980). Spouse differences in communication style preference, perception, and behavior. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 42*, 585-593.

King, L. A. (1993). Emotional expression, ambivalence over expression, and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 10*, 601-607.

Nelson, K. (1981). Individual differences in language development: Implications for development and language. *Developmental Psychology, 17*, 170-187.

Newman, B. M., & Newman, P. R. (1995). *Development through life: A psychosocial approach* (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Noller, P. (1980). Misunderstandings in marital communication: a study of couples' nonverbal communication. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 39*, 1135-1148.

Rogoff, B., & Morelli, G. (1989). Perspectives on children's development from cultural psychology. *American Psychologist, 44*, 343-348.

Rubin, L. B. (1983). *Intimate strangers: Men and women together.* New York: Harper and Row.

Rutter, M. (1990). Commentary: Some focus and process considerations regarding effects of parental depression on children. *Developmental Psychology, 26*, 60-67.

Snow, C. E. (1984). Parent-child interaction and the development of communicative ability. In R. L. Schiefelbusch & J. Pcikar (Eds.). *Communicative competence: Acquisition and intervention.* Baltimore: University Park Press. p. 69-108.

Stinnett, N., & DeFrain, J. (1989). The healthy family: Is it possible? *The second handbook on parent education.* New York: Academic Press.

Tannen, D. (1990). *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation.* New York: William Morrow & Co.

Tronick, E. Z., & Cohn, J. F. (1989). Infant-mother face-to-face interaction: Age and gender differences in coordination and the occurrence of miscoordination. *Child Development, 60,* 85-92.

White, B. L., Kaban, B. T., & Attanucci, J. S. (1979). *The origins of human competence.* Lexington, Mass: D. C. Heath.

Learning Activities

1. Importance of communication in family life

a. In Family Relations Research Teams, draw a picture of your simulated family situation and label it, "A Scene in a Typical Day of the XYZ Family." Include various members of your simulated family using typical communicative phrases, such as those listed below. Display the pictures in class. Describe your first impression of these pictures.

(1) Not now, I'm watching television.
(2) Can't you see I'm trying to read the newspaper?
(3) I've had a stressful day, I just want to lie here and relax.
(4) Get off the phone! I need to call my friend.
(5) What do I need to do to get some help around here?

Discussion Questions

- *Is the family atmosphere you depicted conducive to family communication? Why or why not?*
- *Are the family members communicating with each other? Why or why not?*
- *What would you do to change this situation and improve communication?*
- *What communication challenges do families face?*

b. Write a story about a situation in which you were trying to communicate something to someone in your family. In pairs, share your stories and identify why communication was important in that family situation.

c. Collect magazine and newspaper articles that illustrate how communication has broken down in family settings. Discuss what you would have done differently if you were in that situation.

d. **FHA/HERO:** Poll teens and parents to discover concerns regarding family communication. Identify top concerns and set a project or activity goal to provide information and/or build communication skills to address these concerns. Conduct information and awareness activities such as displays, brochures, or guest speakers. Evaluate the impact of your project on chapter members, students, and local families.

2. Effective and ineffective communication

a. Using classroom resources such as textbooks and audiovisual materials, define *communication*. In small groups, list words that describe or are related to communication. Post these words in the classroom and define any unfamiliar words. Read **Model of a Single Communication** (p. 202) and circle those words and phrases that you have identified as being related to the communication process. In small groups, write a definition for *family communication*. Share your definition with the class and decide how communication and family communication are similar and different.

Discussion Questions

- *Why is communication important to families? To individuals? To society?*
- *What are the consequences of good communication in relationships?*
- *What types of communication skills do you use in class? In your family? At work? At school?*
- *What do these skills have in common?*

b. Complete **Self-Description Exercise** (p. 203). In pairs, share your objects and display them in the classroom. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook about your communication style using the questions below.

(1) How would you describe yourself as a communicator?
(2) When are communication skills most important to you? Least important?
(3) What do you consider before trying to communicate something important to someone else?
(4) How has your present family shaped your communication skills?
(5) What communication skills would you like to develop for your future family?

Discussion Questions

- *Was it difficult to think of a way to represent your communication style? Why or why not?*

- *Why is it important to think about the ways in which you communicate with others?*
- *Will being a good communicator contribute to satisfying relationships with others? Why or why not?*

c. Read **Family Communication Patterns** (p. 204).

Discussion Questions
- *What are the consequences of effective communication? Ineffective communication?*
- *How often are we misunderstood? At school? With friends? With family? At work?*
- *Do we always say what we mean? Why or why not?*
- *What can be done to clarify our messages?*
- *Why do you suppose some families communicate better than others?*

d. Complete **Listening in for a Day** (p. 205). Review **Checking Up On Communication Skills** (p. 54). Using the data collected on **Listening in for a Day** (p. 205), identify examples of effective and ineffective communication. Post examples in the classroom and explain why you classified each example as effective or ineffective. In small groups, share observations and draw conclusions about communication you observed.

e. Make a poster illustrating the levels of communication listed below. Explain the purpose of each level of communication and why peak communication is important to a strong family.

(1) Cliché conversation: small talk with little personal sharing
(2) Reporting: sharing facts about others, no self-relating
(3) Sharing ideas: expressing ideas, judgments, and decisions; beginning self-revelation, but no trust is established
(4) Sharing feelings: emotional intimacy and beginning to have emotional needs met
(5) Peak communication: complete openness and honesty, usually memorable rare occurrence of perfect accord or harmony, reactions shared

Discussion Questions
- *What level of communication occurs most often in families?*
- *Why is peak communication difficult in some families?*
- *What skills are needed at each level of communication?*
- *What events might occur in a family to cause the family to move to a different level of communication?*

Developing Family Communication Patterns

3. Constructive communication strategies

a. In small groups, list five phrases you least like to hear from parents or siblings. Then list five phrases you most like to hear from parents or siblings. Share your lists and note phrases in common. Complete **Door Openers and Slammers** (p. 206). Create examples of situations in families in which door openers and slammers were used.

Discussion Questions
- *What are the consequences when these two types of phrases are used in families?*
- *Why are these phrases used?*
- *Which type of phrases lead to stronger families? Why?*

b. Read **Communicating with I Messages** (p. 207-208).

Discussion Questions
- *Why are I messages part of effective communication strategies?*
- *What are the consequences of using each type of message?*
- *Why is an I message more effective than a you message?*
- *What can you do to make your communication more effective?*

c. In pairs, choose one of the family communication situations below or create your own situation. Create and perform two role-plays: one using an I message in that situation, and the second using a you message. Compare the possible consequences of both role-plays. Decide which was the more effective method of communicating.

(1) You've just finished a five-page paper for class. You leave the room and return to find that your little sister has colored on three of the pages.
(2) Your mother is a single parent and enjoys going out each weekend with her friends. She expects you to take care of your younger brother whenever she is away from the house. Now that you are in high school, you would like to do some things with your friends on the weekends. You think it is unfair that your mother does not consider your needs and always assumes that you will be around to babysit.
(3) You talked to your dad one night about something a friend of yours had done. You thought the conversation was confidential. Two days later your friend says, "My dad found out from your dad what I had done. Some friend you are." You see your dad that night and he says, "Well, I had a talk with Jerry's dad last night. I think he'll straighten his son out, OK."
(4) You and your spouse are both very busy with career responsibilities. A few months ago, you discussed how to share the household responsibilities, but you have noticed your spouse has rarely found the time to do the tasks assigned to him or her. You resent having to do the work that he or she has failed to do.

(5) Each year your aunt expects you and your spouse and two small children to join her for Thanksgiving dinner. Your spouse is pressuring you to spend Thanksgiving with the other side of the family and has suggested possibly going to your aunt's every other year. You feel this is fair but are afraid to hurt your aunt's feelings. You have never missed a Thanksgiving at her house.

d. Use classroom resources to differentiate between verbal and nonverbal communication. Read **Communicating with Nonverbal Messages** (p. 209). Write the following on the chalkboard and discuss: 60 to 75 percent of our communication is nonverbal. Often times mixed messages are given. At least 85 percent of what we say is misinterpreted. Complete **Becoming Aware of Nonverbal Messages** (p. 210). In pairs, share your list responses, describe some of the motions and gestures you use, and explain what each means.

Discussion Questions
- *What nonverbal expressions does your family use?*
- *What factors should you consider when interpreting nonverbal messages?*
- *How do nonverbal messages differ among cultures?*
- *What happens when nonverbal messages are misinterpreted?*
- *What happens when nonverbal and verbal messages do not match in communication?*

e. In small groups, create role-plays illustrating how verbal messages can be interpreted in different ways because of the nonverbal messages transmitted in the same communication. For instance, take a phrase such as "How are you?" and role-play it in two ways: one communicating interest and the other communicating disinterest.

f. **FHA/HERO:** Develop the card game **Guess the Message** (p. 211), and play it at your next chapter meeting.

Discussion Questions
- *Which version was easiest to act out? Why?*
- *What similarities did you notice in how the emotions were communicated? What differences?*
- *What happens when you are unable to read nonverbal messages accurately?*

g. Complete **Listening Habits** (p. 212). Share your findings and identify differences between effective and ineffective listening.

h. Read **Hints for Effective Listening** (p. 213-214).

i. **FHA/HERO:** At a chapter meeting, choose a controversial issue to discuss. Establish ground rules for the discussion that require good listening. For example, one rule might be that before you can respond to a speakers' comments, you must summarize what that speaker has said. Designate some chapter members to act as observers and record examples of communication for later discussion. In small groups, share your observations, noting your chapter's communication skills. Analyze the importance of good interpersonal communication and how this has a direct effect on the success of your chapter.

Discussion Questions
- *What was most difficult about this experience?*
- *If you had not had to summarize the speakers views before giving your own, would you always have been aware of what was being said? Why or why not?*
- *Is active listening a necessary part of constructive communication? Why or why not?*
- *Would it be helpful to have a similar rule at a family meeting? Why or why not?*

j. In pairs, complete **Steps to Active Listening** (p. 215-216). Share your responses with the class and explain the consequences of using active listening when communicating in families.

Discussion Questions
- *Is active listening an easy or difficult communication skill for you? Why?*
- *How important is active listening to effective communication?*
- *Is active listening more important in some communication situations than others? Why or why not?*

k. **Action Project:** Complete **Listening Habits Checklist** (p. 217). Set personal goals for improving your listening skills, chart your progress, and summarize your project in a written report.

l. In Family Relations Research Teams, designate two group members as communicators and others as observers. The communicator will role-play the situations below while the observer watches the conversation. After the role-play, ask the observer to explain why the communication was effective and/or ineffective. Repeat other role-plays until all group members have assumed the observer role.

(1) A father and daughter discuss whether or not she is allowed to date a boy that is quite a bit older than she.
(2) A father and son discuss the possibilities of buying a new car for their teenage son to drive.

(3) A husband and wife discuss who should stay home from work with their sick child.
(4) Two siblings fight over the use of the telephone.
(5) A father and son argue because the son refuses to do homework or bring books home even though his grades are dropping.
(6) A mother refuses to let her teenage daughter go out since the daughter has already been out two nights this week.
(7) A family argues over household chores.

m. **Action Project:** Develop a personal goal that would improve your communication with your family. Keep a journal recording your experiences in communicating with your family. At the end of your project, evaluate the progress you have made toward your goal.

4. Barriers to communication

a. Identify factors about communication settings that influence your decisions about how best to communicate effectively. Your list may include some of the contextual factors below. Describe how each of these factors might influence whether or not you communicate effectively.

(1) Time for effective communication
(2) The developmental level of the receiver
(3) Gender differences between receiver and sender
(4) Cultural differences between receiver and sender
(5) The physical setting for the interaction
(6) The mood or feelings of the sender and receiver
(7) Levels of power (dominant or subordinate) held or perceived by sender and receiver

Discussion Questions
- *Which of these contextual factors have you experienced in recent communication settings?*
- *Which of these contextual factors can make communication difficult? How so?*
- *Which of these contextual factors would occur in family communication?*
- *What can one do to enhance communication when faced with each of these contextual factors?*

b. Draw an elaborate mirror frame on a piece of paper and reflect on the things that keep you from communicating effectively. Write these things inside the mirror frame. Compare your responses with the barriers to communication identified on **Communication Roadblocks** (p. 218). In Family Relations Research Teams, choose a barrier and research answers to the questions below with regard to that

barrier. Form new groups, with each member of the new group having researched a different barrier. Share information about barriers and develop a chart with information about at least four different barriers to communication.

(1) How would you describe this barrier?
(2) How does it inhibit communication?
(3) Create examples of communication situations in which this barrier is present.

c. **FHA/HERO:** For one week, watch television shows about families to analyze family communication problems. Identify barriers to communication experienced by the characters in these programs. Discuss the consequences of these barriers and identify ways to change the situations to remove the barriers.

d. Read **Things Kids Say That Are Guaranteed to Make Their Parents See Red!!** (p. 219). Make a list of things parents say that make you see red. Identify reasons why these phrases can be seen as barriers to communication in families.

e. **Action Project:** Observe your family's communications for a period of time and record situations in which barriers to communication are present. Schedule and hold a family meeting to discuss your observations and plan ways to improve communication in your family.

5. Developmental and individual differences in communication

a. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose a simulated family situation or use the one you selected in Activity 1d of the Relating to Others Module. Consider the similarities and differences between the ways in which members of your simulated family communicate, and list factors that would contribute to differences in communication styles. Share your list with the class and compile an overall list on the chalkboard. You may have identified some of the differences below.

(1) Age differences (young person to adult person)
(2) Gender differences (male/female)
(3) Power differences (parent/child)
(4) Nonverbal communication preferences (meanings of gestures or other nonverbal signals)

Discussion Questions
- *Why do these differences exist?*
- *Why should you be aware of these differences when communicating in a family?*
- *How can you accommodate these differences to make communication effective?*

b. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook comparing how you communicate with friends to how you communicate with your family. Use the questions below to guide your reflection. In pairs, share your journal entries and list differences in communication with friends and communication with family.

(1) In what ways do you typically communicate with family members? With friends?
(2) What special communication techniques are unique to family? To friends?
(3) What is similar about your communication with friends and with family? Different?
(4) Why do these differences exist?
(5) Do you communicate more effectively with family or with friends? Why?

c. In same gender groups, female groups list ways boys communicate and male groups list ways girls communicate. Compare the lists and note similarities and differences. Discuss how these differences become evident in family communication.

d. Complete **Ready! Set! Communicate!** (p. 220).

e. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a panel of parents to class to discuss how they communicate with teenage children. Devise a list of questions to use to stimulate discussion about challenges in communicating with different ages and genders.

f. **Action Project:** Volunteer at a recreation center, child care center, or program in which you will be interacting with children. Keep a journal outlining communication situations in which you were responsible for communicating a message to a child. Note the skills you use and the way that you set the stage for communication in these situations. Write a summary about what you have learned when communicating with someone at a different developmental level.

6. Appropriate times, settings, and circumstances for communication

a. As a class, discuss how times, settings, and circumstances can influence the effectiveness of family communication. In small groups, read the case study below. Determine what happened in the case study and what the consequences were of the actions taken. Then change the timing, setting, and/or circumstances of the scenario to result in better communication. Role-play your scenario for the class.

(1) Melissa was asked to go to the homecoming dance by Jason, the boy she has been dying to go out with. She will need a new dress and she knows her mom, who is a single parent, is really struggling to make ends meet. In addition, her mom doesn't really like Jason, who is three years older than

Melissa. Melissa decides she must ask her mother tonight because Jason is demanding an answer. Her mother arrives home from work two hours late. It has been a horrible day for her. Absolutely nothing went right and her boss hinted at a possible lay-off. Melissa bounds out of her room and says "Hey, mom, I need a dress for homecoming–I'm going with Jason!" Her mother explodes.

Discussion Questions

- *What did you change about the scenario? Why?*
- *What are the consequences of your version of the situation?*
- *How does your version illustrate effective communication?*

b. In Family Relations Research Teams, resolve the family communication problem below by using the practical problem-solving process. Turn in one completed **Practical Family Problems Think Sheet** (p. 29) for your group. Each group member should sign the sheet that they agree the solution is the best. One member of the group will be randomly selected to explain how they used the process to solve the communication problem.

(1) Jason, Joan, and Jessey Conway have just moved to a new neighborhood. Jessey had many friends at his last school and he also played quarterback on the football team. Jessey plans to try out for the football team. He has attended several practices and the coach said he's the best quarterback he's ever seen. One day after practice a gang of guys threatens his life if he tries out for the team and makes it. Jessey is afraid, and he has no friends to talk to. When Jessey gets home that day his mother notices he is upset so she asks, "Jessey, what happened today? Why are you so upset?" Jessey says, "Mom, I don't want to talk about it." He goes to his room and slams the door. Joan has never seen her son so upset and she is very worried about him. What should Joan do?

Discussion Questions

- *What did you consider as you decided which decision was best?*
- *What choices does Joan have?*
- *Why is communication important to this situation?*

c. **Action Project:** Develop a plan to hold regular family meetings in your family. Talk with family members about the best place and time to meet, and listen to the concerns of family members to determine agenda items for the family meeting. Set the stage with the right time, set a time limit, establish rules for the meeting, and identify items to be discussed. Keep a record of your meetings. Interview family members to determine the results of holding these meetings.

d. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook summarizing what you have learned about communication through the learning activities in this module. Use the questions below to guide your reflection.

(1) Why is it important to have good communication skills?
(2) Describe your style of communicating. How is your style different or similar to those of other members of your family?
(3) What are the most important skills of effective communication?
(4) Which skills do you possess? Which would you like to improve?
(5) How will your communication behavior change as a result of your participation in the learning activities in this module?

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Write a paragraph explaining the importance of interpersonal communication skills in family life.

2. Given examples of family communication, distinguish between effective and ineffective communication.

3. Identify at least four barriers to communication in families.

4. Given case studies of communication among family members, identify developmental and individual differences in communication skills.

5. Given case studies, identify appropriate times, settings, and circumstances to communicate with family members.

Classroom Experiences

1. Write a story about a situation in which you were trying to communicate something to someone in your family. In pairs, share your stories and identify why communication was important in that family situation.

2. Design a three-dimensional object from construction paper that illustrates your communication style.

3. Observe and record communication situations. Identify examples of effective and ineffective communication and explain why you classified each example as effective or ineffective.

4. In pairs, choose a family communication situation and perform two role-plays: one using an I message in that situation, and the second using a you-message. Compare the possible consequences of both role-plays. Decide which was the more effective method of communicating.

5. Identify ways you communicate attitudes and feelings both verbally and nonverbally by completing a chart that lists two or more ways you speak and signal to others in various situations.

6. Given sample statements, identify the feelings behind the statement and an appropriate active listening response.

7. In cooperative learning groups, choose a communication barrier and research that barrier. Form new groups, with each member of the new group having researched a different barrier. Share information about barriers and develop a chart with information about at least four different barriers to communication.

8. Write a journal entry comparing how you communicate with friends to how you communicate with your family.

9. Given a communication situation, describe the factors you will consider as you communicate. Then write what you will say and do to establish the mood for effective communication.

10. In small groups, read a communication case study and determine what happened in the case study and what the consequences were of the actions taken. Then change the timing, setting, and/or circumstances of the scenario to result in better communication. Role-play your scenario for the class.

11. In cooperative learning groups, resolve a family communication problem by using the practical problem-solving process.

12. Write a journal entry summarizing what you have learned about communication through the learning activities in this module.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Complete a listening skills checklist to evaluate your listening skills. Set personal goals for improving your listening skills, chart your progress, and summarize your project in a written report.

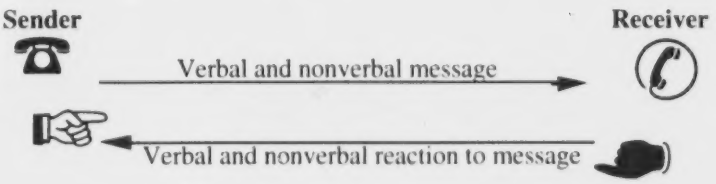
2. Develop a personal goal that would improve your communication with your family. Keep a journal recording your experiences in communicating with your family. At the end of your project, evaluate the progress you have made toward your goal.

3. Observe your family's communication patterns for a period of time and record situations in which barriers to communication are present. Schedule and hold a family meeting to discuss your observations and plan ways to improve communication in your family.

4. Volunteer at a recreation center, child care center, or program in which you will be interacting with children. Keep a journal outlining communication situations in which you were responsible for communicating a message to a child. Note the skills you use and the way that you set the stage for communication in these situations. Write a summary about what you have learned when communicating with someone at a different developmental level.

5. Develop a plan to hold regular family meetings in your family. Talk with family members about the best place and time to meet, and listen to the concerns of family members to determine agenda items for the family meeting. Set the stage with the right time, set a time limit, establish rules for the meeting, and identify items to be discussed. Keep a record of your meetings. Interview family members to determine the results of holding these meetings.

Model of a Single Communication



Communication is a process that involves both sending and receiving messages. The communication message is complete when it is sent (encoded), received (decoded), and reacted to. When both sender and receiver fulfill their responsibilities in the process, clear communication can be achieved. The skills in the process, as described below, are skills that can be learned with practice.

1. The role of the sender is as follows:
   - Initiate the message. Choose a time and place that will enhance communication.
   - Decide what to say and how to say it. Consider the purpose of the communication.
     (a) What specific action or event led to your desire to speak?
     (b) What do you think (rational thought)?
     (c) What do you feel (emotions)?
     (d) What do you want from others?
     (e) What action are you willing to take?
   - Accurately describe ideas, perceptions, feelings, and needs without implying judgment: "I think. . ."; "I feel. . ."; "I want. . ."; or "In my view. . ."
   - Consider the perspective of the receiver when phrasing your message.
   - Make your verbal and nonverbal messages match. Consider the following:
     (a) Eye contact
     (b) Posture
     (c) Gestures
     (d) Facial expressions
     (e) Voice tone
   - Observe verbal and nonverbal reaction from receiver.
   - Correct message if necessary.
   - Stop and let receiver react.

2. The role of the receiver is as follows:
   - Be attentive and show interest with nonverbal messages.
   - Listen without planning what to say next.
   - Listen to understand what the sender thinks and feels.
   - Listen without interrupting.
   - Make brief comments to show interest: "I see. . ." or "Uh-huh."
   - Draw out additional information to improve your understanding. Use phrases such as:
     (a) Tell me more about. . .
     (b) Do you mean that. . .?
     (c) I'm not sure I understand.
     (d) Are you feeling?
     (e) Would you like to talk about . . . ?
     (f) Let's discuss it further.
   - Once sender corrects or acknowledges that you've heard correctly, react.

3. The following can influence whether the message is accurately sent and received:
   - Body language
   - Words with multiple meanings
   - Mixed signals
   - Stereotyping
   - Prejudice
   - Accusations
   - Destructive criticism
   - Use of power
   - Poor self-esteem or negative attitude
   - Noise or distraction
   - Quarreling
   - Moralizing, preaching, lecturing
   - Poor timing
   - Perceptions

Self-Description Exercise

- *How do you go about communicating with others?*
- *How would you describe yourself as a communicator?*
- *What strategies do you use when you interact with others?*

These are the questions you will want to consider as you complete this exercise. The purpose of this activity is to think about yourself as a communicator. You will design a three-dimensional object out of construction paper that reflects your style as a communicator. The shape of the object, the colors of the paper used, and the kind of object built can all reflect your style of communication. For instance, you may choose bright colors such as yellow or orange to describe an outgoing, cheerful communication style. You might use the shape of a person or a house to identify the importance of your family in helping you develop your communication skills.

In the space below, rough out a design or make some plans for your construction paper object.

When you have completed your object, choose a partner, and share what you have made. Explain ways the object reflects aspects of your communication style. Then listen as your partner describes his or her object.

Family Communication Patterns

Strong families communicate with each other in many different ways. The communication patterns formed in the family depend on many factors including the skills of individual members, the atmosphere in which communication takes place, and most importantly the ability of family members to negotiate and compromise in conflicting situations that are inherent in family life. The chart below gives some distinguishing characteristics of effective and ineffective communication within a family.

Effective Family Communication	*Ineffective Family Communication*
Both positive and negative feelings are expressed in constructive ways.	Feelings are unexpressed, ignored, or expressed in a destructive manner, resulting in feelings of inferiority, rejection, and insecurity.
Those listening to communication look for both nonverbal and verbal messages.	There is little attempt to understand what is being communicated.
Family members are able to encourage expression of and empathize with the feelings of others.	Family members are unable or unwilling to empathize with other's situation.
Family members encourage conversation, valuing it as part of time together.	Put-downs and turn-off words are used to discourage communication.
Active listening is used to indicate that the person communicating is understood.	There is little or no exchange of ideas or opinions.
Communication happens in an atmosphere of security and trust.	Those with power in the family use it to control one-way communication.
Conflict is resolved with a two-way dialogue in which both sides have opportunities to share their perspectives and arrive at a mutually agreeable solution.	Conflicts often go unresolved, resulting in frustration and destructive expression of feelings.
Family members make time for communication, controlling things such as the use of the television.	There is no time set aside for communication and passive activities such as watching television control time families spend together.

Listening In For A Day

Each day you are surrounded by communications at home, at school, and on the job. For an entire day, make a special effort to pay careful attention to the communication that takes place around you.

Think about how successful the communications are. Are people sending and receiving clear messages? Are people listening well to what others are saying? How do nonverbal messages affect the communication?

After listening in for a day, choose one communication that especially interested you. Describe it in detail and analyze what you think was happening. No real names, please, unless it happens to be your own.

Use these questions to guide your analysis:

1. What was the purpose of the communication?

2. How did the sender communicate the message? What type of statements were used? Give some examples.

3. Did the receiver listen well? Why or why not?

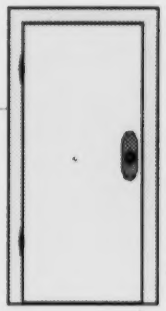
4. Explain whether or not the communication had the desired result.

5. In what ways could the communication have been improved?

6. What did you learn from observing this communication?

Door Openers and Slammers

Read the commonly used door openers and door slammers below. Add others you have heard used or have used yourself. After adding to the lists, answer the questions below.



Door Openers

Tell me more.

Do you mean that . . .?

I'm not sure I understand . . .

Tell me if I'm wrong.

Are you feeling . . . ?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Door Slammers

Shut up.

You're wrong

I don't want to listen.

That's a stupid thing to say!

If you had any sense . . .

You don't know what you're talking about.

_____

_____

_____

_____

1. Which of the openers and slammers have been used on you?

2. Which have you used on others?

3. What emotions do you feel when you get the following openers or slammers?

   If you had any sense . . .

   Don't be so stupid . . .

   (Name your own)

Source: *Colorado Core Curriculum: Relationships.* Denver Colorado: Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System and Colorado State University, 1991.

Communicating With *I* Messages

I Messages are communication tools that let another person know

(1) how his or her behavior makes you feel.
(2) that you trust him or her to respect your needs by modifying his or her behavior appropriately.

You messages are the opposite of I messages. You messages tend to evoke blame, resentment, and defensiveness, while I messages tend to evoke understanding, empathy, and willingness to see the other's point of view.

I Messages make the assumptions that the receiver is:

- capable of making appropriate decisions, and will do so when provided with good information
- willing and able to make decisions for the common good when provided with the right information
- a person who cares about people

I messages include a description of your feelings, what happened, and your reaction. To practice various ways to make an I message you can use the open-ended statements below.

I feel *(describe feelings)* _____

when *(describe what happened)* _____

and then I *(describe your reaction)* _____

OR

I feel (feeling) _____

when *(describe what happened)* _____

and when I feel *(repeat feelings)* _____

and I *(reaction)* _____

when *(describe what happened)* _____

OR

I get *(feeling)* _____

and then I *(reaction)* _____

Source: *Colorado Core Curriculum: Relationships*. Denver Colorado: Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System and Colorado State University, 1991.

Communicating With *I* Messages (continued)

Practice writing I messages and You messages for each of the situations below. The first one provides an example of each.

Situation	*You* Message	*I* Message
1. A father is upset because his daughter often arrives home after her midnight curfew.	"You'd better be in by 12:00 or else."	I feel worried when you come home late and I would feel better if you would be home by midnight because I am concerned about your safety late at night.
2. A child is upset because an older brother refuses to share the family bicycle.		
3. A mother is upset with her son when he sits down to watch TV because she thinks his chores should come first.		
4. A brother and sister are making so much noise, talking and laughing so loudly, that an older sister can't hear a telephone message.		
5. A sister is always taking clothes from her sister without asking; she doesn't take any responsibility to return them clean.		
6. John makes plans to meet his friend Peter at the park. John shows up 40 minutes late and offers no excuse or apology.		

Communicating with Nonverbal Messages

The earliest human communication is relayed from the parent to the child through touching and tender loving care. For some time, a baby responds with cries, smiles, and squirms of body language that are prespeech forms. Gestures are movements of the body and limbs that serve as supplements to speech or are substitutes for it. Children, as they gain more speech, transform early gestures into words. In some cultures, talking with hand motion accompaniment is considered bad taste. In one African country, pointing is done with the tongue rather than with fingers.

Grooming and Dress: Strong, nonverbal signals are sent to others by the clothes you choose to wear. Proper clothing varies greatly from beach, to church, to school. Clean uniforms inform the customer that this is likely to be a sanitary place to eat. The employee appears to care about personal appearance, so the employee is probably going to give the type of restaurant service desired. Disorderly, messy clothing suggests that one is disorderly and messy about their job as well.

Eye Contact: Most people prefer eye contact when talking with someone. It says, "I care what you are saying," and indicates that the person is paying attention. It also suggests a quality of honesty and sincerity. It is very desirable to seek the same eye-to-eye height level when talking about things of a serious nature. For example, children respond better to adults who kneel to speak with them.

General Gestures and Movement: There are positive movements and those considered negative or inappropriate, though much of this interpretation can vary with cultural influence. Positive movements might be a smile, a nod, or a wave. A relatively relaxed use of the body and a pleasant facial expression, unrushed, produce a relaxed atmosphere.

Glaring with cowered eyebrows, raising the eyebrows, shoulder shrugs, head shakes, crossed arms and legs can be interpreted as nonverbal messages. Rolling eyes and sighing usually signal a negative emotion. Making faces, angry looks, grabbing things, stiff body jerks with other quick movements, and up-tight posture signify stress. Yawns, leaning on hands while listening, and slouching posture may signal boredom.

Gestures create lasting impressions in those that observe you whether at home, at school, or on the job. Be sure you are sending the signals you want received.

Body Carriage: The way one walks and stands, tells others a great deal about what one thinks of themselves. Even the chair you choose in class when given a choice tells the teacher about your willingness to participate.

Becoming Aware of Nonverbal Messages

Identify ways you communicate attitudes and feelings both verbally and nonverbally for the same situations by completing the following chart. List two or more ways you speak and signal to others for each situation below.

	Verbal	Nonverbal
Greetings		
Departure		
Affection		
Praise		
Disapproval		
Come to me		

Guess the Message

In groups of four, use a deck of playing cards to play the game below. The cards in the deck each mean a different emotion or signal, depending on the version you select below.

Version 1

Card	***Emotion***
2 =	Shyness
3 =	Fear
4 =	Loneliness
5 =	Disappointment
6 =	Anxiety
7 =	Happiness
8 =	Grief
9 =	Anger
10 =	Peacefulness
Jack =	Boredom
Queen =	Anticipation
King =	Excitement
Ace =	Love

Version 2

Card	***Signal Message***
2 =	See, I told you so!
3 =	Don't bother me with that!
4 =	Go jump in the lake!
5 =	Get off my back!
6 =	Now, that's really clever!
7 =	It's my turn on the phone.
8 =	Well, darn it anyway!
9 =	I really like that!
10 =	Well, isn't that a bad situation!
Jack =	I'm terribly disappointed in you!
Queen =	Now, Just look here!
King =	Cut it out!
Ace =	In one ear and out the other!

Once you have decided which version to use, deal out all but about five cards for the draw pile so everyone has the same number of cards.

Get rid of your cards by correctly role-playing or guessing the gestures used by other players to express the emotion in Version 1 or the signal messages in Version 2.

The first person to get rid of all cards is the winner.

To Play:

1. Player to the left of the dealer begins by selecting one (or more) cards from his or her own hand.
2. The card is laid on the table face down.
3. The player, without words, acts out the emotion or signals the message to represent that card.
4. When the other players think they recognize what is being acted out, and also have the correct card, they are allowed to lay the card face down on the table in front of themselves.
5. To check, all cards are turned face up at the same time. Those that match the actor's card are collected and placed on the bottom of the draw pile. If no one matches, the actor did a poor job of communicating so the actor must take the card back and draw from the draw pile. Those with wrong guesses must also draw a card. If players put two or more cards down that seemed to match, then the same number must be drawn to replace the originals in their hands.

Listening Habits

Following are 21 statements describing behaviors a person usually finds irritating because he feels he is not being listened to. Check (✓) the ten that are the most irritating to you and make you think the other person is really not listening.

_____ 1. The other person doesn't give me a chance to talk. I go in with a problem and never get a chance to tell about it.
_____ 2. The other person interrupts me when I talk.
_____ 3. The other person never looks at me when I talk. I don't know whether he is listening or not.
_____ 4. The other person continually fidgets with a pencil, a paper, or something, looking at it, and examining it rather than listening to me.
_____ 5. The other person treats me like an inferior.
_____ 6. The other person never smiles—I'm afraid to talk to him.
_____ 7. The other person asks questions as if he doubts everything I say.
_____ 8. Whenever I make a suggestion, the other person always puts it down.
_____ 9. The other person is always trying to get ahead of my story and guess what my point is, sometimes even finishing my sentence for me.
_____10. The other person frequently answers a question with another question and usually I can't answer. It embarrasses me.
_____11. The other person argues with everything I say—even before I have a chance to finish stating my case.
_____12. Everything I say reminds the other person of an experience he has had or a happening he has heard of recently. I get frustrated when he continually interrupts to say, "That reminds me. . ."
_____13. The other person sits there picking hangnails, or clipping fingernails, or cleaning his glasses, etc. I know he can't do that and listen, too.
_____14. He just waits for me to get through talking so he can interject something of his own.
_____15. When I have a good idea, he takes credit for it by saying something like, "Oh, yes, I have been thinking about that, too."
_____16. The other person stares at me when I'm talking and looks me in the eye so directly that I feel self-conscious.
_____17. The other person overdoes being attentive—too many nods of his head, or mm-mms or uh-huhs.
_____18. The other person inserts humorous remarks when I am trying to be serious.
_____19. The other person acts as if he is doing me a favor in seeing me, and frequently looks at the clock or his watch while I am talking.
_____20. The other person passes the buck about problems I raise.

Source: *Colorado Core Curriculum: Relationships.* Denver Colorado: Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System and Colorado State University, 1991.

Hints for Effective Listening

Hearing: Do you ever hear the beginning of what someone is saying and immediately figure you know what he or she is going to say? Do you tune out at that point? If so, don't jump to conclusions when you listen. By assuming you know what is coming next, you can be distracted by your own thoughts. You may miss the speaker's main idea and damage your understanding of what is being said.

Interpreting: The next time you're listening, try listening for ideas rather than for facts. Pay close attention. Clear your head of your own ideas. Listen instead to the speaker's ideas. Then try to find the main theme or reason for what is being said. Ask yourself, "Where is that fact leading? Why is the speaker presenting these ideas?"

Evaluating: Train yourself to evaluate the main idea being presented, not the way the person is delivering the ideas. For instance, you have probably heard a person speak with charm, and yet you realize the person said little or nothing. There are others who speak with an air of authority and still are wrong. Or, an unpolished speaker may have something important to say. Put aside your opinions and listen rather than judge.

Responding: When you're concentrating on listening, it shows. Nod your head to indicate when you understand. If possible, give the speaker feedback by repeating in your own words what you have heard. Ask questions if you don't understand something. Listen, and you will hear!

Probes

1. *Open-ended Questions* are ones that require a wide-range of responses to a broad topic. These are excellent conversation starters. They help open up the discussion and give each person a chance to contribute.
   - What do you like?
   - How do you feel about . . .?
   - Tell me what you think it means . . .?

2. *Brief Comments Showing Interest* help carry the conversation further. Such statements encourage the speaker to continue communicating. Used often, they help accent your interest and involvement as a listener.
   - Oh, I see.
   - Of course.
   - Certainly.

3. *Pauses or Silence* give people a chance to stop and think before they continue, or give another speaker an opportunity to join in the conversation. Silence can also be used to slow the pace of a conversation and bring it back to a relaxed, informative level.

4. *Reflective Statements* indicate understanding, but not necessarily agreement. They also keep the conversation moving and can encourage other participants to express themselves in support of your reflective statement.
   - I understand that you're upset . . .
   - I know that you want to . . .
   - I appreciate how you feel . . .

Source: *Colorado Core Curriculum: Relationships.* Denver Colorado: Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System and Colorado State University, 1991.

Hints for Effective Listening *(continued)*

5. *Neutral Questions and Phrases* also keep the conversation flowing but help channel it into a more specific direction.
   Have you ever . . .?
   Do you enjoy . . .?

6. *Summary Statements* are ones in which you briefly repeat what has been said to check understanding and gain commitment.
   Am I to understand that . . .?
   Is it safe to say that you . . .?

7. *Leading Questions* can also be used to summarize the previous conversation. Sometimes these can be misunderstood as manipulation and a clever cover to get others to do what you have in mind.
   You certainly want to . . ., don't you?

8. *Closed-ended Questions* are the most rigid and structured probes. They permit only a narrow response: Yes or No. They can be excellent for checking understanding of commitment to action.
   Do you understand . . .?
   Are you willing to . . .?

Communication Chart

Skill	Definition	Results
Silence	No verbal response	Allows freedom to talk. Sometimes it is all that is necessary.
Grunts	ooo, hmmm, ah, oh, uh, huh	Lets a person know you are listening. Encourages more talk.
Parroting	Repeating exact sentence or part of the sentence	Lets person know you heard exactly what they said. Draws them out more.
Paraphrasing	Repeating what you heard in your own words	Adds clarity, spurs thought, gains acceptance.
Active Listening	Listening with your entire being. Listening between the lines. Identifying feelings. Using empathy.	Promotes caring and understanding. It is meaningful. Increases closeness, openness, and warmth.

Steps to Active Listening

1. *Think Carefully About Your Initial Response*

   In many communication situations we react too quickly, and frequently the reaction is a roadblock response. If we can learn to stop ourselves from using our traditional responses, we have taken a huge step or the positive. Even if you do not know what to say next, but you are aware that your traditional response is less helpful–that's progress!

   Awareness is the first step in growth. Suspending your initial reaction leads to the awareness necessary for Step 2.

2. *Listen for Sense Data*

   Hear the feelings underlying the words. Listen between the lines.

3. *Recognize and Accept Feelings —Acknowledge*

   Feelings are okay–we own them! It is how we act on them that makes a difference. Permit yourself and others to own their feelings.

4. *Feed the Feeling Back–Interpret What Was Heard*

   Feed the feelings back to the sender to let them know that you heard, and that how they feel is also important to you. This tells the other person that he or she has been heard and understood.

   Be inventive. If you hear anger, feedback:

   I hear anger in your voice . . .

   You must be enraged . . .

   You are really boiling . . .

5. *Trust*

   Actively express your trust that the other person can do something about the situation.

Steps to Active Listening *(continued)*

Activity

Describe the feelings you hear in the statements below. Then write an active listening response to the situation.

Statement	Feelings	Active Listening Response
1. You got into my room and messed up my CD collection.		
2. The teacher wouldn't call on me all day.		
3. The teacher doesn't realize there are other things in my life besides school.		
4. The people in that office gossip too much.		
5. Sue took Amy away from me and now Amy won't be my best friend anymore.		
6. I am really tired of all your advice.		
7. You never listen to me!		
8. I hate school–this is my last day.		
9. It was such a good day.		
10. I got the highest grade in the class.		

Listening Habits Checklist

	How Often			
	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Positive listening habits				
1. Do you show interest nonverbally? Through posture? Eye contact? Facial expressions?	____	____	____	____
2. Do you try to figure out what the other person means from his or her point of view?	____	____	____	____
3. Do you let the other person know you understand by restating in your own words what he or she said?	____	____	____	____
4. Do you allow the other person time to correct anything you might have misinterpreted?	____	____	____	____
5. Do you ask questions to draw out the other person and learn more about what was meant?	____	____	____	____
Negative listening habits				
1. Do you interrupt while the speaker is talking?	____	____	____	____
2. Do you fail to hear the other person because you are planning what to say as soon as you can get a word in?	____	____	____	____
3. Are you thinking of yourself rather than about what the other person is saying?	____	____	____	____
4. Do you answer with responses that show the other person that you do not listen or do not care about what is being said?	____	____	____	____
5. Do you drift in and out of the conversation, listening only occasionally?	____	____	____	____
6. Do you criticize, evaluate, or judge what the other person is saying?	____	____	____	____
7. Do you busy yourself with obvious distractions while the other person is speaking?	____	____	____	____
8. Do you misinterpret what the other person is saying?	____	____	____	____
9. Do you give your meanings for words and events more merit than you do the other person's meanings?	____	____	____	____
10. Do you simply give too little time and attention to the process?	____	____	____	____
11. Do your responses fail to show respect?	____	____	____	____

Communication Roadblocks

Communication can be a very complex process. Many factors can interfere with whether or not a message is accurately sent and received. Sometimes we may not mean to block communication and we may not even realize that we're doing it. But sometimes our messages aren't being received, or when they are, they are coming across in a negative or destructive way. Here are some possible roadblocks:

Stereotyping or Prejudice:

Judging others before truly hearing them out. Prejudice clouds clear messages that you might receive. Also feelings that are biased can cause someone to send biased messages.

Advising or Lecturing:

This practice prevents one from showing respect and allowing others to express their own feelings. Even if you disagree with the sender, try to listen to the views of the sender. Check out and clarify their message, but don't interpret it by adding your own advice to their words.

Threatening, Insulting, or Attacking:

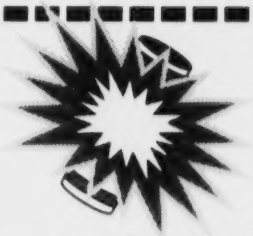
This approach can create an atmosphere of hostility and defensiveness.

Sarcasm:

Don't say one thing when you mean another. People only get confused by people sending one message, while their words or body language says another. Statements that are sarcastic only make the receiver defensive and not responsive to the sender.

Distracting:

When someone does not give their full attention to the communication process, they miss the point of the communication. Likewise, saying or doing something that has nothing to do with the subject can be distracting to the sender.



Things Kids Say

That Are Guaranteed to Make Their Parents See Red!!

Does your family use words as weapons? Certain words and phrases can be aimed right at family members' deepest fears, doubts, and worries.

Strong families recognize and avoid these "loaded" words. They realize continued communication is more important than "winning" an argument or exerting power.

Offered by Alex J. Packer, Ph.D., not so you can use them, but so you can avoid them. You'll find even more useful tips in his book, *Bringing Up Parents*.

You can't tell me what to do.

Of course they can. Whether you do what they tell you or not is another matter. The problem with this expression is that it instantly changes any argument into a power struggle between you and your parents. What you really want to say is . . .

You can't make me.

That's more like it. If you're going to have a knock-down, drag-out power struggle, at least let it be over the correct issue. . . The fact that it gets harder and harder for them to make you do the things they wish and prevent you from doing the things they don't wish is the key to one of the great parent-teenager power struggles, which is exactly why you have to avoid using this expression. Better response: Try to meet your parents in the middle, where a compromise can be found.

You just don't understand.

The ultimate dismissal. The problem is, if they don't understand now, they're not going to understand later. Nothing will change unless you make it change. Better response: work to improve ongoing communication so parents will understand your perspective.

I don't care.

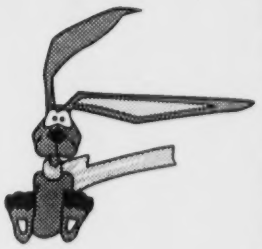
Oh yes you do, or you wouldn't have said you don't. What may escape you in the cloud of excessive blasé you're trying to create is this: You can't win with "I don't care." Let's say your parents do believe you don't care. That gives them permission to do whatever they want. Now let's say they don't believe you. They're tipped off to the fact that you do care, and they'll stick to their threat like peanut butter to your gums. Better response: wait a minute. I really do care. And explain why.

Nothin.

Like your parents' "We'll see," the word "nothin" means, "The last thing I want to do right now is answer your question." But anything is better than nothing. Better response: tell your parents about what's happening in your life. They won't feel ignored and hurt. What they will feel is that you're sharing, confiding, and communicating.

From *Bringing Up Parents* by Alex J. Packer, Ph.D., copyright © 1992. Used with permission of Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, Minn; (800) 735-7323. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Ready! Set! Communicate!



You can set the context for communication by considering the things you will say and do to establish a particular mood. Read the situation in the first column. In the next column, describe the factors you will consider as you communicate. Then write what you will say and do to establish the mood for effective communication in the last two columns

Situation **The context you will try to set for the communication**	**Factors to consider before communicating** **Potential communication differences or barriers**	**Verbal** **What would you say during the communication?**	**Nonverbal** **What nonverbal actions would you use during the communication?**
You're upset with your parents and you're going to try to confront the issue			
You want your sister to lend you something and she has never lent this item to you before			
You want to ask your parents' permission to take a trip with some friends			
You had a big argument with your grandmother and you want to make up			
Your daughter is really upset about something and you want to open her up to talk to you			
You're extremely angry! Your mother wants to talk it out but you want to be left alone			

Family Relations

Dealing with Stress, Conflicts, and Crises

CONTENT MODULE 6

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about family stress, conflicts, and crises?

Competency 5.0.6: Deal effectively with family stressors, conflicts, and crises

Competency Builders:

5.0.6.1 Identify potential sources of family stress, conflict, and crisis
5.0.6.2 Identify indicators and consequences of family stress, conflict, and crisis
5.0.6.3 Develop strategies for resolving family stress, conflict, and crisis
5.0.6.4 Evaluate sources of formal and informal support available to families and family members
5.0.6.5 Plan strategies to prevent or minimize stress, conflict, and crisis

Supporting Concepts:

1. Sources of stress, conflicts, and crises
2. Signs and consequences
3. Coping and managing techniques
4. Support systems

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

Families are constantly faced with challenges to the status quo. The dynamic tension between forces toward individuation and independence on the one hand and forces toward family cohesiveness and group identity on the other presents a constant source of stress. Each of the many family structure changes such as divorce, widowhood, and remarriage, is a potential stressor. In addition, many factors outside the family threaten to overwhelm or demoralize the family. Human families have always been challenged by threats to their safety and survival, to their structural organization, and to the integrity of their interpersonal ties. The focus of contemporary research appears to be moving toward a greater understanding of how families cope with stress and conflict, and why some families appear better able than others to avoid disorganization and crisis (McKenry & Price, 1994).

Background

Any productive discussion of family stress, conflict, crisis, and coping requires the establishment of a common set of definitions. These words are part of the vocabulary of daily life so students will probably

bring very different definitions to these terms. In order to discuss practical problems such as how to prevent, minimize, or resolve stress, it is useful to have a shared vocabulary.

Stress may be defined as a physical reaction that occurs in response to any demand from the environment, especially situations that create uncertainty (Selye, 1976). The demand is called the stressor, the reaction to the stressor is called stress. The body is prepared to respond to any demand with a stress response. The demand may be perceived as exciting, pleasant, and invigorating. This kind of demand is sometimes referred to as eustress. A demand may be perceived as threatening, unpleasant, or harmful. This kind of demand is usually referred to as distress. The distinction between eustress and distress depends on the way an event is perceived by the person. For example, one person may perceive the winter holidays as a time of social engagement, activity, and spiritual uplift; another person may perceive the same holidays as a time of loneliness, boredom, and depression. The meaning given to an event may depend on its timing, the historical context, the cultural beliefs surrounding the event, and other personal or family expectations. It would be a mistake to assume that any particular event is equally stressful to all who experience it.

Although we are accustomed to thinking about stress as being the result of unpleasant or negative events, positive as well as negative events produce stress responses. Weddings, graduations, and promotions produce stress responses as do funerals, failing a course, or being fired. The stress response occurs in reaction to many day-to-day events like hearing the buzzer on the alarm, worrying about missing the bus, or getting an invitation to an important social event, as well as in reaction to major life events. In fact, you might say that stress is part of the excitement of living in an unpredictable, changing world. Lack of change or tedium can itself be stressful if the person feels "trapped" in an environment that is not adequately challenging and stimulating.

Reuben Hill (1958) provided a model for guiding the study of family stress and crisis, often referred to as the ABC-X model of family stress. In this model, A refers to the event or stressor. Any event that has the potential to change the family system or disrupt the status quo is a stressor. The event may or may not create stress depending on B, the family's resources and strengths at the time it encounters the stressor, and C, the meaning that the family makes of the event. In this model, it is important to recognize that stressor events have no predetermined impact on the family. The impact depends on the interaction of A, B, and C.

Boss (1987) offered a classification of stressor events that highlights the wide range of conditions that have the potential for bringing about change in families and provides a more differentiated view of A in the ABC-X model (see Table 1). Stressor events are commonly differentiated by whether they are normative and developmental, meaning that most people experience these changes and they appear to be related to the natural unfolding pattern of change associated with growth; or some type of environmental disaster suggesting that the change is unexpected, not experienced by most people, and brought about by forces clearly outside the person's control. The concept of volition has been given a significant place in understanding the nature of stress. A change, whether positive or negative, that appears to be within the family's control, has a different meaning and may be perceived as less stressful, than one which is imposed by outside forces.

Table 1
Classification of Stressor Events

TYPE:	
Maturational	Situational
Normative	Disaster
Developmental	Environmental
Predictable	Unexpected
Volitional	Nonvolitional
SOURCE:	
Inside the family	Outside the family
SEVERITY:	
Chronic	Acute
Mild	Severe
Isolated	Cumulative (multiple problems)

Source: Boss, P. (1987). Family stress. In M. B. Sussman & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.). *Handbook of Marriage and the Family*. New York: Plenum, p. 699.

The concept of the stressor event was elaborated further to emphasize that any single stressor occurs within the context of the family's past experiences. Furthermore, the consequences of the stressor often add additional challenges to the family's ability to cope (McCubbin & Patterson, 1983; Olson & McCubbin, 1983). For example, a child might be seriously injured while participating in an athletic event. However, this stressor may have been preceded by very high hopes that the child would be eligible for an athletic scholarship to college. Much of the family's time and significant resources may have been devoted to developing the child's athletic skills to a highly competitive level. And after the injury, the medical bills, the lack of contact with team members, the lost chance of the scholarship, and the pain and suffering associated with rehabilitation would constitute a "pile up" of stressors which may intensify the family's experience of stress.

Research on family strengths discussed in Module 5.0.5 provides greater detail when considering B, the family's resources. Resources can be considered individually, looking at the skills, talents, finances, earning power, and physical and mental health of each family member, and at the resources of the family as a group, such as their combined financial resources, their sense of cohesiveness, their capacity for cooperation and problem solving, their social support system, and their level of flexibility in adapting to change. The availability of resources does not always mean that they will be used. Sometimes, the family's definition of the stressor prevents calling into play certain available resources.

Dealing with Stress, Conflicts, and Crises

Research on the third element in the model, C, the perception of the event, introduces the psychological perspective, especially the meaning the individuals and family group makes of the stressor. In the face of a stressor, the person makes a cognitive appraisal of the potential harm or threat of the situation and has an emotional reaction to the situation. The combination of these cognitive and emotional processes influences the kinds of coping behaviors that will be called into play (Lazarus, 1991). Three kinds of coping strategies are guided by this process, direct actions that might alter the nature of the stressor or reduce its harmful or disruptive effects (putting bars on the windows and locks on the doors to prevent theft); intrapsychic coping strategies that alter the way the stressor is evaluated (adopting a more fatalistic outlook which says you have to learn to accept certain things that cannot be prevented); and coping strategies that change or control the emotional impact of the stressor (learning relaxation techniques to help control anxiety when you are faced with a potential threat).

Family values play a major role in determining C, the meaning of an event, for the family. For example, Boss (1987) discusses the implications of having a mastery orientation versus a fatalistic orientation, in coping with stress. The mastery orientation suggests that the family believes it has a great deal of control over its fate and can solve its problems, whatever they are. A fatalistic orientation suggests a view that many events are outside one's control, whether predestined by a higher power, mystically guided, or the result of cultural and environmental forces over which one is helpless. These two outlooks will influence how families define a stressor event, the extent to which they mobilize resources to address the event, and how much stress they eventually experience.

The combination of the stressor event (and often the accumulation of stressors), the resources, and the meaning of the event, determine the severity of the stress response and whether the family is able to cope or becomes disorganized and falls into crisis. Coping is usually viewed as an adaptation to the stress in which new solutions are identified, old responses are modified to be more effective, and the family achieves a new level of functioning. Coping means that the stressor has resulted in some type of change, and normally the term suggests that the direction of the change is toward new growth. Effective coping strategies serve to promote the continued physical and emotional health of family members and to preserve the adaptive, functional relationships within the family as a group.

In contrast to coping, the outcome of extreme stress can result in crisis or what some family scientists refer to as disorganization. During this period, the family's former coping strategies are inadequate to reduce the threat of the stressor and the family's sense of closeness, affection, effective interdependence, and adaptive flexibility deteriorate. Some of the common indicators of a family in crisis are as follows:

- Family members can no longer perform their expected roles.
- Boundaries between family members are blurred.
- Outsiders are required to perform family functions.
- Family members cannot make decisions or solve problems that face the family.
- Family members become withdrawn, neglectful, and/or abusive toward one another.

Families may experience long periods of stress; they may undergo prolonged periods when they do not have the resources to meet the demands they face or when they have to keep modifying their structure to

adapt to a pile-up of stressors. However, these conditions are not the same as a crisis, a situation in which the family structure seems to fall apart and the family members become immobilized.

Family crises are typically viewed as turning points or critical transitions (Lamanna & Riedmann, 1991). In order to recover from crisis and move toward a new, higher level of functioning, families need to engage in new coping strategies. Often this requires making use of resources outside the family. Most families turn to other close relatives, friends, or colleagues at work who have experienced a similar crisis and who can validate one's hopes about building new strengths to meet the crisis. Support groups or self-help groups are often an important source of social support. These kinds of groups have formed to help family members cope with a wide range of challenges including alcoholism, child abuse, death of a child, coping with children who have severe mental or emotional disabilities, coping with gifted children, and caring for partners or parents with Alzheimer's disease.

The crisis often forces family members to recognize that they do not have all the skills and resources necessary to handle the challenges they face. The crisis may uncover other problems in the family, such as problems in communication, intimacy, parent-child relationships, or gender-role expectations, that need to be addressed in order for the family to move ahead. Family members may turn to other experts such as marriage and family therapists, psychologists, financial management advisors, or social workers to help overcome these problems and begin to establish a new, more adaptive family organization.

References

Boss, P. (1987). Family stress. In M. B. Sussman & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.). *Handbook of Marriage and the Family*. New York: Plenum, p. 695-723.

Hill, R. (1958). Generic features of families under stress. *Social Casework, 49*, 139-150.

Lamanna, M. A., & Riedmann, A. (1991). *Marriages and families: Making choices and facing change* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Lazarus, R. S. (1991). *Emotion and adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McCubbin, H. I., & Patterson, J. M. (1983). Family stress and adaptation to crisis: A double ABC-X model of family behavior. In D. H. Olson & B. C. Miller (Eds.). *Family Studies Review Yearbook*, Vol. 1. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, p. 87-106.

McKenry, P. C., & Price, S. J. (1994). *Families and change: Coping with stressful events*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Olson, D. H., & McCubbin, H. I. (1983). *Families: What makes them work?* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Selye, H. (1976). *The stress of life* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Dealing with Stress, Conflicts, and Crises

Learning Activities

1. Sources of stress, conflicts, and crises

a. Using classroom resources, define *stress*. View **A Model of Stress** (p. 234). In pairs, identify the top ten things that cause day-to-day stress in families. Sequence the items on your list from those events that cause the most stress to those that cause the least amount of stress. Compare your list to **Top Ten Family Stressors** (p. 235). Identify examples of each type of stress on the list.

Discussion Questions
- *Why should you be concerned about the effect of stress on families?*
- *Why is it important for families to learn how to deal with stress?*
- *What are the consequences when families have trouble dealing with stress?*

b. Read **Family Crises** (p. 236). In Family Relations Research Teams, choose an example of a family crisis and explore statistics regarding the extent to which families experience the crisis, the ways family members often react to the crisis, strategies for dealing with or coping with the crisis, and resources for support. Your research and reports of your findings should continue throughout this module.

Discussion Questions
- *How can crises be a source of stress for families?*
- *Would certain types of crises cause more stress than others? Why or why not?*
- *How are the examples of crises identified on the handout similar to or different from the everyday stressors identified in Activity 1a?*

Teacher Note: Each cooperative group should choose a different type of crisis and research and present information as the following aspects are discussed throughout the module learning activities: the crisis and its consequences, coping and managing techniques, and support systems. Help students choose topics that are of interest to them and represent crises faced by families in the community.

c. Design a "Problem Box." Write family situations (real or imaginary) related to family stress, crises, and conflict, and put them in the problem box. Throughout your study of family crises, conflict, and stress, choose problems from the box and answer the following questions about that problem.

(1) What is the problem in this situation?
(2) How is this problem affecting the family? Society?

(3) What factors should be considered before deciding what to do about this problem?
(4) What information is needed to solve the problem? Where can you get this information?
(5) What choices are available? What are the consequences of these choices?
(6) What action should be taken that will result in the most positive consequences for the family?
(7) What resources will the family need to carry out the solution to this problem?

d. Collect current newspaper articles that deal with family stress, conflict, and crises. Periodically throughout this unit, choose one of the articles and write an entry about the topic in your journal. Use the questions below to guide your reflection.

(1) What is the source of crises or stress in the article?
(2) What are the consequences of the problem described in this article?
(3) What would you do about this problem? Why?

Teacher Note: Cooperative groups should create displays of newspaper articles about their chosen family crisis.

e. Read **Stress and the Family** (p. 237-238). Complete the questions below about the reading. In pairs, share your response to the questions and add any additional information you did not originally include.

(1) What causes stress, conflict, or crises in a family?
(2) How does stress impact each family member?
(3) Why do stressful situations effect people differently?
(4) How can stressful situations strengthen the family?

2. Signs and consequences

a. In Family Relations Research Teams, use classroom resources to research indicators of stress. Compile your findings in a chart classifying each indicator as physical, emotional, social, or intellectual. Form new groups with each group member having been in a different cooperative group, and compare your charts, adding information you do not have on your own chart. Compare your charts to **Stress Indicators** (p. 239). Identify those indicators present when you experience stress in your life.

Discussion Questions
- *Why is it important to be aware of stress indicators?*
- *Are some indicators more severe than others? Why or why not?*
- *Which of these signs of stress have you seen in family members?*

b. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a family counselor to class to discuss the consequences of family stress. In listening teams, choose one of the topics below, develop a series of questions to ask the speaker with regard to that topic, and summarize the speaker's comments on the topic after the presentation.

(1) Symptoms families experience when under stress
(2) Consequences of long-term, unmanaged stress on families
(3) Healthy responses to stress

Discussion Questions
- *Why does change in our life create stress?*
- *What can be done to lessen the effects of stress?*
- *How does unmanaged stress affect family members? At work? In communities?*

3. Coping and managing techniques

a. View **Adjustment to Crisis** (p. 240). Identify examples of how families proceed through this model when coping with a crisis.

b. Interview a member of a family who has recently experienced a crisis using the questions below. Share findings with the class regarding how the family's experience reflects the adjustment to crisis model and strategies the family used to deal with the crisis.

(1) What event caused the crisis situation?
(2) How long did it take the family to resolve the crisis?
(3) Were family members able to organize their thoughts to determine exactly what needed to be done about the problem? If so, what plans did the family make to resolve the situation?
(4) Did family members seek help from others?
(5) What resources did the family use to deal with the crisis?

c. View **Coping with Crisis** (p. 241). Use classroom resources and the findings from your interviews in the previous activity to identify various strategies for coping with stress, conflict, and crises. Develop a chart of these various strategies, indicating the consequences of using each strategy and the context in which each strategy might be effective.

d. In Family Relations Research Teams, research coping strategies for the specific crisis situation you choose in Activity 1b. Use the practical problem-solving process to choose an effective coping strategy and develop a plan to effectively deal with the crisis situation. Share your solution with the class. Justify your decision.

Discussion Questions

- *How did you decide which coping techniques were best for this crisis situation?*
- *How do the coping strategies you suggested help the family deal with the stress brought on by the crisis?*
- *What would happen if the strategies you have identified were not used to cope with the crisis?*

e. **FHA/HERO:** Organize a Star Event team on the topic "Coping with Crisis." Perform your presentation for community or school groups in preparation for competing at the regional or state level.

f. Use classroom resources to define *conflict*, and review **Resolving an Issue** (p. 56). Explain how families involved in stress and crisis situations might experience conflict and how the process described on the handout could be used to resolve such conflicts.

g. **FHA/HERO:** Research peer mediation programs available in your own school or other schools. Involve members in peer mediation training or in establishing a peer mediation program at your school if one does not already exist. Explain how these skills can be used in families facing stress and crisis.

h. Use classroom resources to describe the types of relaxation techniques below. For each method, indicate when you would use this technique and how effective it would be in helping you to relax. Use **Tension and Relaxation Exercises** (p. 242) to practice progressive relaxation. Discuss the effect of these techniques on individuals, families, and society.

(1) Deep breathing
(2) Imagery
(3) Progressive relaxation

i. **FHA/HERO:** Use one of the imagery exercises on **Total Relaxation Techniques** (p. 243) to help chapter members relax before or after a chapter meeting. Play relaxing music to enhance the relaxing atmosphere during the exercise. Survey chapter members to determine their feelings before and after the exercise.

j. **Action Project:** Keep a record of stressful events in your life and how you cope with them. Make a chart indicating the event, the source of stress, stress indicators, and your response to the stress. Evaluate the impact of your coping mechanisms on you, your family, and your friends.

4. Support systems

a. View **Family Support Systems** (p. 244). On a sheet of paper, draw a circle and label it "Family Support System." On lines drawn out from the circle, identify family, community, and employment-related sources of support for your family. In pairs, share your family support system diagrams and note the wide range of support available to families.

Discussion Questions

- *Do strong families need support systems? Why or why not?*
- *How do these support systems help families deal with stress, conflict, or crisis?*
- *How might a family's support system change over the family life cycle?*
- *What are the consequences for families who have inadequate support systems?*

b. In small groups, read each situation below and determine what sources of support you would seek in that situation. Identify information you would need to contact sources of support or to explain the situation to a support person or organization.

(1) When you come home from school one day, you find your mother's face black and blue. Her lip is swollen and she seems to be moving around stiffly. You are aware that your parents argue regularly, and that your father has hit her sometimes, but you have never seen it this severe.
(2) Your younger sister has been depressed lately and stays in her room most of the day. When you are able to talk with her, she shares that she is thinking of ending it all.
(3) You and your mother are having difficulty making ends meet. At the end of the month, you often have little or no money left for food. Last month, your mother missed the rent payment and the two of you are in danger of losing your apartment.
(4) Your younger brother has been skipping school a lot lately. His behavior is unpredictable, alternating between upbeat and active to being down and depressed. When you are cleaning the room you share, you find what appears to be drugs.
(5) Your family is trying to find activities to do together that are low in cost.
(6) Your family is trying to cope with the sudden death of a grandparent.

Discussion Questions

- *What criteria did you use to determine whether or not the source of help would be appropriate for each situation?*

- *Are internal sources of support appropriate for these situations? Why or why not?*
- *Why is an awareness of support important to strong families?*

c. In Family Relations Research Teams, make a poster illustrating specific sources of support for the crisis situation you selected in Activity 1b. Display the posters in the classroom.

d. Review **Barriers to Seeking and Getting Support** (p. 245).

Discussion Questions
- *Which barriers would you be most likely to experience?*
- *Which would be most difficult to overcome?*
- *What skills do you need to overcome these barriers?*

e. **FHA/HERO:** Develop a brochure of community services that support families. Include information on services provided, contact person, phone number, address, and population served. Make the brochure available to families in your community. Invite community leaders to a chapter meeting to discuss possible family support services missing from your community. Generate possible solutions for these missing services. As a chapter, assist local leaders in taking action to fill family service gaps.

Discussion Questions
- *What are the strengths in your community in terms of support for families?*
- *What barriers may be present to keep people from seeking help through these resources?*
- *How can you and others break down these barriers?*
- *What types of community support are missing?*
- *What can you do as a chapter to foster the development of appropriate community support for families?*

f. Read **Telephone Hotlines to Help with Family Crises** (p. 246). In small groups, choose one of the hotlines, call the organization that sponsors the hotline and determine the services and information the hotline provides. Report your findings to the class.

Teacher Note: Hotline numbers are principally designed for emergency calls. Encourage students to phone the organization information number during regular business hours to determine the services and information the hotline provides.

g. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook summarizing your ideas about family stress and crises. Use the questions below to guide your reflection.

(1) What sources of stress will you most likely experience in your future family?
(2) What crises will you most likely experience?
(3) What coping strategies will you most likely use to deal with these stresses and crises?
(4) What sources of support will you most likely use?

h. **FHA/HERO:** Choose a family crisis situation of interest to your chapter and sponsor a school awareness program on that particular crisis. Invite a panel of speakers from community agencies to discuss what is available to families experiencing this type of crisis. Display information posters and distribute brochures about this crisis to students at your school.

i **Action Project:** Volunteer at a community agency that serves families. Keep a journal about your experiences and write a report summarizing the value of this agency in helping families that face stress, conflict, and crises.

j. **FHA/HERO:** Adopt a community agency that serves families and provide volunteer services and assistance to this organization. Meet with leaders of the organization to determine how your chapter can help. Then organize appropriate projects.

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Without the aid of references, identify at least five potential sources of family stress, conflict, and crisis.

2. Without the aid of references, identify at least three indicators and consequences of family stress, conflict, and crisis.

3. Given related information, develop at least five strategies for resolving family stress, conflict, and crisis.

4. Without the aid of references, evaluate at least two sources of formal and informal support available to families and family members.

5. Given case studies, plan strategies to prevent or minimize stress, conflict, and crisis.

Classroom Experiences

1. Collect current newspaper articles that deal with family stress, conflict, and crises. Choose one of the articles and write a journal entry about the topic describing the source of conflict or stress, the consequences of the problem, and what you would do about this problem.

2. In cooperative learning groups, choose an example of a family crisis and explore statistics regarding the extent to which families experience the crisis, the ways family members often react to the crisis, strategies for dealing with or coping with the crisis, and resources for support. Research and report your findings.

3. In cooperative learning groups, use classroom resources to research indicators of stress. Compile your findings in a chart classifying each indicator as physical, emotional, social, or intellectual.

4. Use classroom resources to identify various strategies for coping with stress, conflict, and crises. Develop a chart of these various strategies, indicating the consequences of using each strategy and the context in which each strategy might be effective.

5. In cooperative learning groups, choose a family crisis and use the practical problem-solving process to choose an effective coping strategy. Develop a plan to effectively deal with the crisis situation. Share your solution with the class. Justify your decision.

6. In small groups, read crisis situations and determine what sources of support you would seek in each situation. Identify information you would need to contact a source of support or explain the situation to a support person or organization.

7. In small groups, choose a hotline that provides services to families in crisis, call the organization and determine the services and information the hotline provides. Report your findings to the class.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Keep a record of stressful events in your life and how you cope with them. Make a chart indicating the event, the source of stress, stress indicators, and your response to the stress. Evaluate the impact of your coping mechanisms on you, your family, and your friends.

2. Volunteer at a community agency that serves families. Keep a journal about your experiences and write a report summarizing the value of this agency in helping families that face stress, conflict, and crises.

A Model of Stress

Life involves change; change brings stress. Stress, potential stress, and crises are nearly unavoidable. Family stress can be defined as "an upset in the steady state of the family." Since all families undergo periods of stress, the ability to predict stressful periods, to understand the signs, and to learn to cope are crucial skills. Strong families are more successful in adapting to stress. The research model developed by Olson and McCubbin in 1983 is useful because it addresses important components of stress.

ABC-X Stress Model

A **= Stressors and stressor pileup**

Normative or developmental
External or internal
Short-term or long-term
Stressors with and without norms

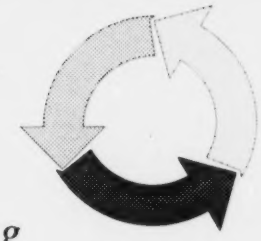
B **= Resources**

Structural
Economic
Educational

C **= Definition of problem or perception of stressor pileup**

X **= Outcome**

Top Ten Family Stressors



1. *Economics/Finances/Budgeting*
2. *Children's Behavior/Discipline/Sibling Fighting*
3. *Insufficient Couple Time*
4. *Lack of Shared Responsibility in the Family*
5. *Communicating with Children*
6. *Insufficient "Me" Time*
7. *Guilt for Not Accomplishing More*
8. *Spousal Relationship (Communication, Friendship, Sex)*
9. *Insufficient Family Playtime*
10. *Overscheduled Family Calendar*

Source: Dolores Curran, Parent Educator and Author. Reprinted from *Stress and the Healthy Family*, HarperSanFrancisco, 1985.

Family Crises

A crises is defined as . . .

a crucial change in the course of events, a turning point, an unstable condition in affairs

Lamanna, M. A., & Riedmann, A. (1991). *Marriages and Families: Making Choices and Facing Change*

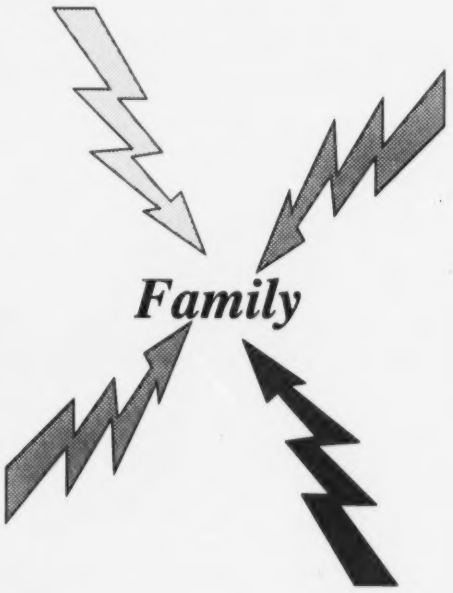
This definition of crises means that . . .

(1) Crises necessarily involve change.
(2) A crisis is a turning point with the potential for positive or negative effects or both.
(3) A crisis is a time of relative instability.

Most people face some stress or crises during their lives. Their success depends on the means by which they are able to cope with these situations.

Examples of Crises Faced by Families include . . .

- Unemployment
- Frequent moves
- Divorce
- Remarriage
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Mental breakdown
- Family violence
- Handicapped family member
- Criminal attack
- Birth of a child
- Death
- Financial loss
- Serious illness or accident
- Natural disaster
- Stepparenting
- Retirement
- House or business destroyed by fire



Stress and the Family

The close, personal relationships among family members and the close proximity in which members exist cause stress to spread from one member to the family as a whole. In general, if one member is affected by stress, other members are also affected. Managing stress, then, becomes a major task in preventing family problems.

Families are involved in the process of stress in several ways. Family action may be a stressor. That is, the behaviors and actions of the family as a whole cause stress. The stress may be in individual members or in the family as a whole. The resultant behavior (s) may also be reflected from one member to another or from the family to society and the world as a whole.

Families also function as recipients to stress from outside the family. The outside stressor acts on the family as a whole or on individual family members who then act on the family. Either way, stress within the family occurs and results in particular behavior.

Stressor		Stress		Outcome/Result of Stress
Family arguing over which TV show to watch	*acts upon* → Family and the individual members within	*causes* → Individual bodily reactions	=	Frustration, irritaion, anger, physical abuse reflected from one family member to another General anger of family generated to all of society

Stressor		Stress		Outcome/Result of Stress
Child is taken into a public detention center for being drunk and disorderly	→ Individual *acts upon* → Family	*causes* → Various bodily reactions	=	Anger Hostility Depression

Family Reactions to Stress and Stressors

Families differ in their reactions to stress. Some families are challenged by stress. Other families live in fear of their own stress reactions. The differences in behavior from family to family are based on perception, tolerance, and skill.

continued

Reproduced from S. R. Jorgensen and G. H. Henderson. *Dimensions of Family Life.* Cincinnati, OH, with the permission of South-Western Educational Publishing, a division of International Thompson Publishing Inc. Copyright © 1990 by South-Western Educational Publishing. All rights reserved.

Stress and the Family *(continued)*

Perception. How events or stressors are interpreted will affect resultant stress. If stress is to occur, the family members must perceive the situation as stressful in the first place. For example, one family may consider unemployment or unpaid bills a cause of stress. Other families may consider these situations typical and not stress-producing.

A family's feelings about a particular stressor depend on its belief system. If family members consider family life unrewarding and dull, each new stressor will be viewed in that context. Each new occurrence will be seen as adding new stress to an already troubled situation. Yet, if family life is seen as challenging, meaningful, and rewarding, stressors will be viewed less severely.

Tolerance. Stress tolerance is the capacity to withstand the stressor. It is also the amount of stress the family can withstand before their abilities are seriously impaired. Some families can withstand multiple stressors and not show much stress. Another family becomes extremely stressful over one seemingly minor stressor. One family may become overwrought and hyperactive to the point of severe physical illness with only minor stress. Tolerance levels for stress in another family may be high with large amounts of stress operating without serious problems.

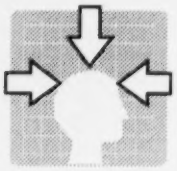
Skills. Some families have many skills and resources to overcome the stress process, while other families have few skills, resources, and assistance. The ways in which a family views its own skills are also important. If a family feels confident and expects to solve its problems, the stress will be less severe than if they feel defeated and at the mercy of the stressor.

Family Stress Factors

There are several factors or principles that relate to stress and/or stressors:

- The more important the event (stressor), the greater the stress that is felt (for example, death, severe crippling, or a major illness).
- Events that occur suddenly or unexpectedly cause a greater feeling of stress (for example, a cyclone or unexpected death).
- The longer an event takes place, the greater will be the stress (for example, unemployment or alcoholism).
- The more simultaneous the stressful events, the greater will be the stress (for example, a house fire, a car accident, and the death of a relative occurring at the same time.)
- The likelihood of stress is greater during a period of change (for example, relocating, new job, or new school).

Stress Indicators



Physical or Behavioral

Accident proneness
Alcohol or drug abuse
Allergies
Appetite (loss or increase)
Arthritis
Asthma
Backaches
Breathing difficulties (hyperventilating, shallow, shortness of breath)
Chest tightness
Cholesterol high
Colitis
Constipation
Cramps
Diarrhea
Dizziness
Dry mouth
Eye pain
Eye squinting
Face downcast
Face flushed
Fainting spells
Fatigue
Fingernail biting
Forehead, raised and wrinkled
Frowning
Gait slowed
Grimacing
Grinding teeth
Hair twisting
Hands cold
Hay fever
Heart pounding or racing
High blood pressure
Hives, rash, itching
Hyper motility (can't be still)
Incoordination
Indigestion
Insomnia
Low resistance to infection and minor illness
Migraine or tension headaches
Muscle tightness; face, jaws, back of neck, shoulders, etc.
Nausea or vomiting
Nightmares
Numb or tingling extremities
Overeating
Pounding and rapid heart beat
Premenstrual cramps or tension
Pupils dilate
Shaking
Skin pale
Sleeping too much
Sighing
Slumped posture
Sneezing
Speech slowed
Stiffness or soreness
Stomach ailments (aches, butterflies, gas, ulcer)
Stuttering
Sweating or sweaty palms
Tearfulness
Tiredness
Trembling, tics, twitching
Urinating frequently
Voice (change in pitch, volume shaky)
Weakness, especially in legs
Weight gain or loss

Emotional or Social

Agitation
Anger or angry outbursts
Anxiousness (general or specific)
Critical of self
Crying
Depression
Difficulty in relationships
Dread
Emotional instability
Fear of groups or crowds
Fears (general or specific)
Guilt feelings
Hyper excitability
Impulsive behavior
Indecisive
Irritability
Jealousy
Lack of initiative
Loss of interest in living
Loss of self-esteem
Moodiness
Restlessness
Sadness
Suspiciousness
Withdrawal from relationships
Worthlessness feeling

Intellectual

Concentration difficulties
Errors in judging distance
Errors in language (grammar, enunciation, pronunciation)
Errors in use of numbers
Fantasy life increased (escape)
Fantasy life lessened
Forgetfulness
Inattention
Lack of attention to details
Lack of awareness to external events
Loss of creativity
Loss of productivity
Mental blocking
Over attention to details
Past oriented rather than present or future
Perfectionism
Rumination
Thoughts of death or suicide
Worrying

Adjustment to Crisis

The diagram below illustrates the path a family might take when adjusting to a crisis. Each of the following stages are part of the model.

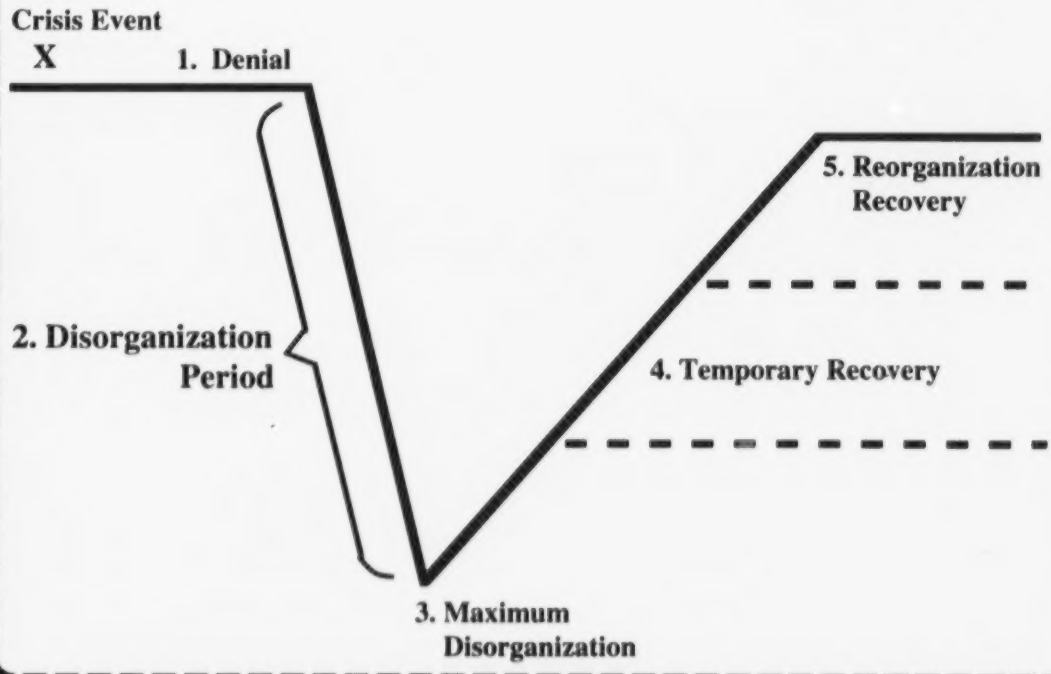
1. Denial: Following the crisis event, the family maintains the status quo before accepting the crisis.

2. Disorganization Period: During this phase, the family realizes the crisis, and may attempt to deal with it. Their efforts, however, may not be effective. Family members may experience decreased self-esteem and isolation.

3. Maximum Disorganization: The family fully realizes the effects of the crisis. No efforts to deal with the crisis have been successful thus far. Substance abuse or family violence can occur at this phase as a result of the extreme stress experienced by family members.

4. Temporary Recovery: The family begins to identify and try out effective coping strategies. New patterns of behavior are attempted with some positive results. Resources are utilized.

5. Reorganization Recovery: The family recovers from the crisis, entering a new reality.



Source: Dr. Susan S. Coady, College of Human Ecology, The Ohio State University.

Coping with Crisis

1. Understand the situation.

- ❑ Ask what changes have taken place.
- ❑ Identify how the family is affected.
- ❑ Use good communication skills.
- ❑ Seek professionals who can provide information.

2. Seek solutions to the problem.

- ❑ Ask what can be done to handle the changes.
- ❑ Keep a tolerant attitude.
- ❑ Don't blame others for the problem.
- ❑ Avoid the use of drugs and alcohol as coping behavior.
- ❑ Be open and flexible.
- ❑ Look for a solution that benefits all family members.
- ❑ Identify available resources in the family and in the community.

3. Strengthen the family unit.

- ❑ Set aside quiet uninterrupted times to talk.
- ❑ Share thoughts and feelings openly.
- ❑ Accept each other's thoughts and feelings.
- ❑ Encourage each other.
- ❑ Take time for family leisure activities.

4. Emphasize personal growth for individual family members.

- ❑ Encourage all members to keep on growing.
- ❑ Keep involved with friends and community.
- ❑ Set goals for the future.
- ❑ Make plans to reach personal and family goals.

Source: Leona Johnson. *Strengthening Family and Self.* Chicago, IL: The Goodheart-Wilcox Company, Inc., 1994.

Tension and Relaxation Exercises

Muscle Area	Tension Location	Tensing Instructions
Hands	Clench and relax, right then left–then both fists.	The back of your hands and your wrists
Upper arm	Bend elbows and fingers of both hands to your shoulders and tense the biceps. Relax.	The bicep muscles
Lower arm	Holding both arms straight out, stretch, extend hands up, then down. Relax.	The upper portion of the forearm
Forehead	Wrinkle the forehead and lift the eyebrows upward. Relax.	The entire forehead area
Eyes	Close the eyes tightly. Relax.	The eyelids
Jaws	Clench jaws. Relax.	The jaw
Tongue	Bring your tongue upward and press it against the roof of your mouth–feel tension. Relax.	The area in and around the tongue
Mouth	Press your lips tightly together–feel tension. Relax.	The region around the mouth
Neck	Press your head backward. Roll to right and back; roll to the left and back, straighten. Relax.	The muscles in the back of the neck and at the base of the scalp, right and left side of the neck
Neck and jaws	Bend the head forward. Press the chin against the chest, straighten. Relax.	The muscles in the front of the neck and around the jaws
Shoulders	Bring the shoulders up toward ears shrug and move around. Relax.	The muscles of the shoulders and the lower part of the neck
Chest	Take a deep breath slowly–hold it for five seconds–exhale slowly. Relax.	The entire chest area
Abdomen	Tighten stomach muscles, make the abdomen muscles hard. Relax.	The entire abdominal region
Back	Pull shoulders back–arch back from chair. Relax.	Lower back
Thighs	Press heels down hard, flex thighs. Relax.	The muscles in the lower part of the thighs
Legs	Hold both legs straight out–point your toes away from your face. Relax.	The muscles of the calf
Legs	Hold both legs straight out–point your toes toward your head. Relax.	The muscles below the kneecap
	Feel the relaxation and breathe easily.	

Total Relaxation Techniques

The Blue Sky

Picture a beautiful blue sky without any clouds in it. As you picture the clear blue sky, feel that your body is growing lighter. Close your eyes and keep the image of the blue sky in your mind. There are no limits to the blue sky. It stretches endlessly in every direction, never beginning and never ending. As you visualize the blue sky, feel that your body has become so light that you have floated up into the clear blue sky. Feel that you are floating in the sky and that all tension, fatigue, worry, and problems have left you. Relax your mind and allow your breathing to seek its own level. Feel yourself floating gently in the clear blue sky which stretches endlessly in every direction, never beginning and never ending.

After several minutes have passed and you feel yourself relaxing, picture that your entire body is merging with the blue sky. Your body is merging with the peace of the blue sky . . .Your mind is merging with the tranquillity of the blue sky . . .Feel that you have actually become the blue sky. You no longer have a body or a mind. You have become the infinite blue sky that stretches endlessly in every direction, never beginning and never ending. Feel that you have become the perfect peace and tranquillity of the blue sky. Completely let go and experience total relaxation.

When you feel that you have relaxed for as long as you like, then open your eyes. You will now have a new deeper sense of relaxation. This renewed calm will stay with you as you resume your normal activities.

The Ocean

Imagine a vast ocean. The ocean is filled with hundreds and thousands of waves. Feel that you are part of the ocean. Imagine that each wave in the ocean is slowly moving through you. As each wave passes through you, feel that all worries, tensions, anxieties, and problems are being washed away in the successive waves. For several minutes, imagine wave after wave passing through you. Feel that each wave that passes through increases the amount of relaxation you feel.

Now imagine that you are going beneath the surface of the ocean. The surface of the ocean is filled with many waves, but below the surface, in the depths, all is calm, silent, and serene. Imagine yourself sinking slowly into the quiet, peaceful depths of the ocean. Here there is only calmness and tranquillity. As you imagine yourself going deeper and deeper into the depths of the ocean, feel that peace is entering into you. Feel that the deeper you go into the inner ocean, the more calm you become. Feel that there is no end to the depths of this ocean. It goes on endlessly. Imagine yourself sinking deeper and deeper into the endless ocean, feeling more calm and tranquillity filling your entire being until you have become completely relaxed.

Source: Unknown.

Family Support Systems

Internal Support Systems

Family members
Friends
Neighbors
Extended family
Shared child care
Shared assistance

Community Support Systems

Clergy and church support groups
Self-help programs
After school programs
Group sponsored activities
Social service agencies
Non-profit agencies organized around specific causes
Private counseling services
Physicians and other health professionals
Community recreation programs
Local health and safety departments
Libraries
Public transportation

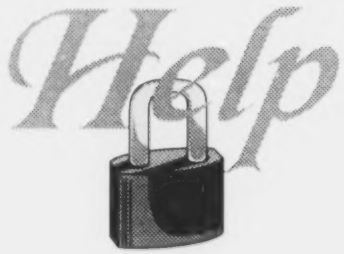
Employment-Oriented Support Systems

Rearranged work week
Flex time
Supportive benefits
Parental leave
Job sharing
Compressed work week
Child care services
Limited transfers

Barriers to Seeking and Getting Support

Isolation

I am alone and I am the only one that has felt like this.
No one else has ever experienced what I am experiencing.
There isn't anyone to help me.
My problems are different from those of others.
You are weak if you ask for help



Denial

This problem will go away.
There really isn't any problem at all.

Extreme Sense of Responsibility

I should be able to handle this on my own.
I don't want to force my problems onto other people.
I don't want to burden others with my problems.
No one else can solve this but me.

Belief That Others Don't Want to Help

Others don't want to hear about my problems. They have enough of their own.
Others don't really want to know, or they would ask me more.
Others don't want to be bothered. They don't really care.
I don't want to infringe on other people's lives.
Others get too upset when they hear about my problem.
They can't deal with my problems.
Others don't know enough to help, so I don't trust them.

Need To Be a "Perfect" Person

I should be able to handle my own problems.
No one else is as good at solving my problems as I am.

Lack of Energy or Strength to Seek Help

It's too complicated to find and use a support system.
It's easier just to do everything myself.
I'm too tired to bother. I'll just let it go.
It takes so much energy to explain my situation to others.

Adapted from *Family Ties.* Worthington: Ohio Coalition for the Education of Handicapped Children, 1990.

Telephone Hotlines to Help with Family Crises

If you are thinking about running away or have run away,
Call National Runaways Hotline (800-231-6946)
They provide: counseling on resolving home problems and referrals to local social service agencies and safe shelters. They will send help to your home in an emergency abuse situation or refer you to Operation Home Free for free transportation home.

Call National Hotline for Missing Children (800-843-5678
They provide: counseling, referrals to local social service organizations, and recommendations of local shelters.

Call National Runaway Switchboard (800-621-4000
They provide: help and guidance for such problems as drug abuse, child abuse, and sexual abuse, referral to local social service agencies and shelters, and transmittal of messages to parents without disclosing the runaway's location.

If you are the victim of or have observed child abuse,
Call National Child Abuse Hotline (800-422-4453
They provide: crisis intervention counseling and referrals to local services. All calls are confidential.

If you or someone you know has a drug problem,
Call Cocaine Helpline (800-662-HELP) or 800-COCAINE (800-262-2463
They provide: counseling on drug problems, referrals to local support groups (such as Narcotics Anonymous and Cocaine Anonymous), to outpatient counseling programs, and to residential treatment centers.

If you have a drinking problem,
Call AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) See your local telephone directory.
They provide: referral to their local support groups.

If you have a parent , friend, or relative with a drinking problem,
Call AlaTeen. See your local telephone directory under Al-Anon.
They provide: referral to local support groups of teenagers who have relatives or friends with drinking problems.

If you feel depressed or suicidal,
Call a local suicide prevention hotline. Most telephone directories list these and other Crisis Numbers in the Community Services section at the front of the White Pages.

If you discover cancer in yourself or your family,
Call for cancer information (800-638-6694)

If someone close to you becomes handicapped,
Call for information on programs for the handicapped (800-424-8567)

If you are having problems as a parent,
Call Parents Anonymous (800-421-0353)

If you discover that you or someone you know has the AIDS virus,
Call for AIDS information
(800-342-AIDS)

Reprinted by permission from page 371 of *Family Living: Relationships and Decisions* by Frank Cox; Copyright © 1994 by West Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

Family Relations

Managing Work and Family Roles and Responsibilities

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about managing work and family roles and responsibilities?

Competency: **5.0.7:** Manage work and family roles and responsibilities

Competency Builders:

5.0.7.1 Analyze interrelationship of personal and family goals and values to work goals and values

5.0.7.2 Analyze how social, economic, and technological changes impact work and family dynamics

5.0.7.3 Develop strategies for sharing ownership of responsibilities of managing family and work

Supporting Concepts:

1. Interrelationship between personal and family goals and values and work goals and values
2. Impact of social, economic, and technological changes on work and family dynamics
3. Strategies for sharing responsibilities of managing work and family

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

One of the challenges that faces modern families is the need to establish effective coordination and boundaries between the domain of work and the domain of family life. For some time, there has been a trend toward increased involvement of married women and mothers of young children in the labor market. Thus, many families are characterized by a dual-earner arrangement. Family science literature has addressed many issues in examining the interface between work and family life such as the relationship between a woman's employment status and the involvement of her husband and children in household tasks; role strain that results from enacting the roles of worker, spouse, and parent; the effect of job characteristics on marital quality; the impact of a mother's involvement in the labor market on the emotional and academic adjustment of her children; and the effects of unemployment on marital and family stability.

Many policy questions have arisen as dual-earner families and employed single-parents attempt to preserve their family's sense of cohesion while enacting their worker roles. Examples include policies regarding availability of quality child care; parental leave for childbirth and adoption; and health care and home care

benefits for aging parents. One of the questions facing American families in the years ahead is how they will negotiate a position with business and industry that recognizes the true interdependence of work and family and does not assume that families will always adapt or change in order to accommodate the needs of the workplace. Collaborating with workplace and public policy makers (such as supervisors, labor leaders, school board members, city government officials, and state and federal legislators) to create family policies that acknowledge the diversity of American individuals and families and help meet the economic and social demands of personal and family life is like fixing a screen door rather than just swatting mosquitoes (Crosby, 1991).

Background

Until recently, Americans viewed family and employment as separate worlds, with much of life organized around the workplace. Unfortunately, this separation has benefited the work world more than the family. With those who tend to control business organizations most likely to have the highest degree of family/work separation, the code of corporate behavior was: "While you are here, you will act as though you have no other loyalties, no other life" (Hunsaker, 1983, p. 87).

The notion of work and family as separate worlds has changed in recent years to reflect a greater understanding of the mutual interdependence between family and work. Way (1991) has identified key ideas that have emerged to support the new notion of the relationship between work and family.

- Life quality is a multi-dimensional phenomenon with family and work playing particularly important roles in an individual's perception of their unique quality of life.
- Family and work roles are two of the many roles in which individuals participate throughout the life cycle. The selection and enactment of these roles is part of the larger process of human development.
- Family and work cannot be viewed in isolation, but must be considered in the context of multiple environments that interact reciprocally.
- Gender has important effects on the family/work relationship.
- How roles and demands are perceived influence the occurrence of role strain and conflict and its impact on individuals and families as much as the situation itself.
- Working women and men and their families can make more informed decisions about the family/work relationship if they are knowledgeable about family and work issues, if they are able to apply mental processes to problematic situations, and if there is a disposition to do so (Way, 1991, p. 17).

One of the most profound changes affecting the way American families view work and family roles has been the increase in the number of married women who are employed. The percentage of employed, married women whose husbands are present rose from 30 percent in 1960 to 58 percent in 1991. The number of women with young children who work outside the house has grown substantially. In 1991, 57 percent of married women with children under three years old were in the labor force, compared with 33 percent in 1975 (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1992). Thus, it has become normative for married women and women with young children to work outside the home. Rather than drop out of the labor force and return to work after their children are grown, the majority of women now remain in the labor force throughout the early years of parenthood (Piotrokowski, Rapoport, & Rapoport, 1987).

These changes have taken place within the context of a dynamic and changing economy. A restructuring of the labor market has led to a decline in the number of high paying jobs and an increase in the number of comparatively low-paying jobs. The manufacturing sector, in which many men are employed, has declined and the service sector, in which many women are employed has grown. Men appear to be experiencing greater difficulty finding stable, high-paying employment; women have little difficulty finding service-based employment but it is typically more short-term, lower-paying work that has few benefits or opportunities for advancement. Women are still heavily concentrated in low-paying jobs. The average woman earns 70 cents for every dollar earned by the average man when 1989 median weekly earning of full-time wage and salary workers were compared. The outcome is that even when both partners are in the labor market, they still experience economic uncertainty and difficulty achieving what they perceive as economic well-being or security (Nickols, 1994).

These trends in the number of low-paying jobs for women have contributed to the feminization of poverty. Though most women with children have husbands who contribute to the family income and share family responsibilities, the number of families maintained by women has increased to 17.6 percent of all families in 1992 (U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1993). In 1988 women represented 62 percent of all persons 16 years old and over with poverty level incomes. The poverty rate of all families maintained by women with no husband present was 33.5 percent; for those families maintained by women with children under age 18, the poverty rate was 44.7 percent. There were 3.6 million families maintained by women (no husband present) that had incomes below the poverty level (U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1990).

These demographic trends indicate a need for all types of families, dual-earners as well as single-parent families, to be well-informed about strategies for balancing work and family roles. Coordinating various role responsibilities is a task that requires time and effort, and since role responsibilities often have varying weights, juggling the roles involves risks and creates stress.

Central to the issue of juggling work and family responsibilities are the cultural assumptions about gender roles. Gender role definitions and values play a key role in how families negotiate the balance between work and family roles and responsibilities. Research shows that gender role stereotypes are perpetuated at home, causing increasing role strain for working women. In a 1986 study, for tasks traditionally thought of as the wife's, 84 percent of the people surveyed shared the child-care tasks, but only 30 percent shared the housework (Feder, O'Farrell, & Allen, 1991). A Boston consulting firm recently interviewed 60,000 workers at 15 major corporations between 1986 and 1991. They found that women spend 44 hours per week on the job and 31 hours on child care and household tasks; men spend 47 hours per week on the job and 15 hours on family responsibilities.

There is no question that the involvement of both husband and wife in the labor market requires a redefinition of traditional family roles and the division of labor, especially redefinition of responsibility for the wide range of household tasks. One analysis of the potential conflicts for dual-earner couples focuses on the relative balance of power and demands for household labor for the two partners (Rosenfeld, 1992). In the traditional male-breadwinner/female-homemaker family model, the husband has more power as a result of his access to financial resources and participates little in the low status household tasks. The

wife has little power and the majority of responsibility for the household tasks. As women have entered the labor market, their access to resources has increased. To the extent that their husbands also help in sharing the household tasks, the well-being and mental health of these women improves. For men, especially in families where there is a relatively high family income, as their wives' incomes match or surpass their own and when they have to take on a greater role in domestic tasks, their well-being declines and their mental health suffers. The reactions men have about feeling demeaned and threatened by demands to participate in household labor are associated with depressive symptoms similar to the reactions that women have when they try to carry the full responsibilities of household tasks and participation in the labor market. Finding the balance of power and household responsibilities that preserves a comfortable feeling of mutual respect and support is a major challenge in the early years of the marriage and one that has to be fine-tuned and renegotiated throughout the marriage (Goodnow & Bower, 1994).

The interconnection between gender expectations and role enactment becomes even more complex once children are added to the family. Couples who begin a marriage having egalitarian values about gender roles are typically better able to integrate work and family roles in the early period of marriage, before children are born. With the addition of children, however, family roles tend to become divided along traditional lines, and egalitarian couples experience greater conflict. Couples who have more traditional values about the differentiation between men and women and their relative power and status in families may experience greater difficulty in the earlier phase of marriage, when both husband and wife are in the labor market. They find greater harmony and synchrony in their marriage once children are born and women reduce their involvement in the labor market in order to spend more time with their children (Silberstein, 1992). It appears that a very crucial factor in marital satisfaction is the congruence that husband and wife experience between their attitudes and values, and their actual behaviors. For example, women who are in the labor force, and who perceive their husbands as supportive of their labor force involvement are much more satisfied in their marriage than are women who perceive their husbands to be resentful or resistant to their labor force participation.

Dual-career couples, in which both partners pursue high-powered professional, technical, or administrative careers, have risen steadily in numbers in recent years. A considerable amount of research done on these couples indicates the characteristics of the relationship that are most likely to be associated with high levels of marital satisfaction (Thomas, Albrecht, & White, 1984):

- Adequate income, with husbands earning more than their wives
- Couple consensus that husband's career is preeminent
- Husband supports wife's career
- Older children
- Satisfying social life
- Husband empathic to wife's stress
- Good sexual relationship
- Discussion of work-related problems
- Role complementarity and role sharing
- Shared activities and companionship

Managing Work and Family Roles and Responsibilities

As family members balance work and family responsibilities, it is important to consider the many benefits of combining life roles, rather than merely seeing the balancing act as a source of stress. An impressive amount of data indicate that all family members can benefit practically and psychologically from combining significant life roles. Juggling life roles has positive benefits because of the variety, amplification, and sharing of life's stories with extended audiences, and buffering of the good and bad in each role. Evidence indicates that women who combine significant life roles are better off emotionally than are women with fewer roles. Role jugglers demonstrate less depression, higher self-esteem, and greater satisfaction with life generally and different aspects of life than do women who play fewer roles (Crosby, 1991). Men who overcome personal and cultural stereotyping, and combine significant life roles experience benefits such as developing domestic skills, spending time with children, and, when their spouse also has a paid job, feeling liberated from financial pressure. Both spouses have been found to experience greater marital satisfaction in dual-earner couples when there is an emphasis on family conversation, shared leisure time activities, empathy, and companionship (Blumstien & Schwartz, 1983).

While coordinating personal and career responsibilities is often assumed to be a personal problem, many believe the core issue is one of our cultural beliefs about the workplace and the need for structural change in work environments that will support families. Personally reinventing solutions to structural and systemic problems consumes time and energy and perpetuates the problems. Lasting improvements can be achieved by improving workplace and public policies that create structures affecting role coordination.

Both individual and collective action is needed to improve workplace policies and attitudes that will better support individuals and families. Workplace policies such as flexible scheduling of work time, family leave, job sharing, and child care allowances or support can be helpful. It is important to consider the effects of these policies on work productivity and family support. Families also need to become involved in determining public policy. Though there is debate about how much legislation is necessary to encourage corporations to be responsive to family needs, legislation enacted in a variety of arenas can be designed to support families in their many roles. Legislation affecting the workplace includes family leave policies, sexual harassment and discrimination, and comparable worth guidelines. Identifying and changing the features of the workplace and society that create unnecessary obstacles and unneeded effort and pain is a fundamental imperative to coordinate personal and career responsibilities and enhance the quality of society.

References

Blumstein, P., & Schwartz, P. (1983). *American couples.* New York: William Morrow.

Cherlin, A. J. (1981). *Marriage, divorce, remarriage.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Crosby, F. J. (1991). *Juggling: The unexpected advantages of balancing career and home for women and their families.* New York: The Free Press.

Feder, M. A., O'Farrell, B., & Allen, L. R. (1991). *Work and family: Policies for a changing workforce.* Washington, DC: National Academy.

Felstehausen, G., & Schultz, J. (Eds.). (1991). *Work and Family: Educational Implications.* Peoria, IL: Teacher Education Section of the American Home Economics Association, Yearbook II.

Goodnow, J. J., & Bowes, J. M. (1994). *Men, women, and household work.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Hunsaker, J. S. (1983). Work and family life must be integrated. *Personnel Administrator, 28* (4), 87-91.

Nickols, S. Y. (1994). Work/family stresses. In P. C. McKenry & S. J. Price (Eds.). *Families and change: Coping with stressful events.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. p. 66-87.

Piotrkowski, C. S., Rapoport, R. J., & Rapoport, R. (1987). Families and work. In M. B. Sussman & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.). *Handbook of marriage and the family.* New York: Plenum, p. 251-284.

Rosenfeld, S. (1992). The costs of sharing: Wives' employment and husbands' mental health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 33,* 213-225.

Silberstein, L. R. (1992). *Dual career marriage: A system in transition.* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Thomas, S., Albrecht, K., & White, P. (1984). Determinants of marital quality in dual-career couples. *Family Relations, 33,* 513-521.

U. S. Bureau of the Census (1992). *Statistical abstract of the United States,* Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (1993). *Employment and earnings.* Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. (1990). *20 facts on women workers.* Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

Way, W. (1991). Frameworks for examining work-family relationships within the context of home economics education. In G. Felstehausen, & J. B. Schultz (Eds.). *Work and Family: Educational Implications.* Peoria, IL: Glencoe-McGraw Hill. p. 1-23.

Yahnke, S., Mallette, D., Love, C., Gebo, E., Felstehausen, G., & Pomraning, D. (1993). *Balancing family and work.* Gainesville, VA: Home Economics Education Association.

Learning Activities

1. Interrelationship between personal and family goals and values and work goals and values

a. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose one of the **Balancing Work and Family Case Studies** (p. 260). Identify the factors that influence how the family in your case study coordinates work and family responsibilities. Share your list with the class and compile a class list of these factors, such as those listed below.

(1) Family life cycle stage
(2) Gender role expectations
(3) Number and type of responsibilities to be balanced
(4) Family goals and values regarding work

Discussion Questions

- *Are some of the factors on your list a greater influence on the family than others? Why or why not?*
- *Would you describe the families in the case study as having a good balance between work and family responsibilities? Why or why not?*
- *What happens when families do not balance work and family responsibilities well?*

b. Using the family case studies in the previous activity, outline your simulated family's goals and values with regard to family and their goals and values with regard to work. List ten household responsibilities they will need to coordinate. Describe how their work responsibilities and household responsibilities might conflict given their goals and values.

c. Complete **Who Does Household Chores?** (p. 261). Examine **Family Assessment: Traditional or Egalitarian?** (p. 262) and determine which belief systems are reflected in the survey responses of men and women on **Who Does Household Chores?** (p. 261).

Discussion Questions

- *Why do some people have trouble accepting nontraditional roles for males or females?*
- *Why are these traditional roles being reexamined by many families?*
- *What are the consequences of each type of belief system?*

2. Impact of social, economic, and technological changes on work and family dynamics

a. Conduct a survey of families in your community to learn about work and family dynamics. Read **How is Work Affecting Families?** (p. 263-264) and add, delete, or modify questions as appropriate for your community. Conduct the survey and compile your findings, drawing conclusions about the interconnectedness of work and family life in your community.

b. Write a story about a time in your family when work life affected family or when something in your family affected work life. In small groups, share your stories and make a list of work concerns and frustrations that affect the family. Then make a second list of family concerns and frustrations that affect work. Share your lists with the class. Compare your concept of the interconnectedness of work and family life to that depicted on **The Effects of Work on the Family** (p. 265).

Discussion Questions
- *How are work and family interconnected in your own life?*
- *Were work and family roles connected in these ways ten years ago? Fifty years ago? Why or why not?*
- *What are the implications of this interconnectedness for families? Workplaces? Society?*

c. Use classroom and community resources to determine trends affecting the interconnectedness of work and family life, such as those listed below. In small groups, choose one of the trends and create a poster illustrating the impact of that trend. Include statistical data and information as well as quotes from surveys or interviews on your poster. Display in the classroom.

(1) Increased involvement of women in the workforce
(2) Changing ideas about men's and women's roles in the work of the family
(3) Increased involvement of parents in the workforce
(4) Feminization of poverty

Discussion Questions
- *What has your experience been with some of these trends?*
- *How are these trends reflected in the results from your survey in the previous activity?*
- *How are each of these trends affecting families? Workplaces? Society?*

Teacher Note: The teacher background information in this module includes statistical information about each of these trends.

d. Using magazines, newspapers, catalogues, and business supply store advertisements, design a display of products and appliances that were designed or improved in the last ten years in response to the trends related to balancing work and family roles. Explain how each of these products and appliances could assist in balancing work and family responsibilities.

Discussion Questions

- *What are the consequences of these technological advancements for families? For society?*
- *Which products or appliances have you used in your home? Why?*
- *Do technological advancements always support the family? Why or why not?*

e. Using resources, define *dual-earner family*. Research statistics on the number of dual-earner families and post the statistics in the classroom. In teams, debate the advantages and disadvantages of having two wage earners in a family.

Discussion Questions

- *What are the consequences for parents living in dual-earner families? For children living in dual-earner families?*
- *Do you see a dual-earner family in your future? Why or why not?*
- *How is the trend in the number of dual-earner families affecting our society?*
- *How do societal expectations affect dual-earner families?*

3. Strategies for sharing responsibilities of managing work and family

a. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose one of the topics below related to managing work and family responsibilities and research that topic. Using a news program format, produce and videotape a news show about managing work and family having each team present their topic in a segment of the show.

(1) Choosing Child Care
(2) Making Quality Family Time
(3) Scheduling and Assigning Household Tasks
(4) Organizing for the Morning Rush Hour
(5) Basic Time Management for Busy Families

Discussion Questions

- *Which of these strategies would be most helpful to you? Least helpful? Why?*
- *Which strategies do you presently use in balancing work and family responsibilities?*
- *What skills are needed to effectively manage family and career responsibilities?*
- *Why is sharing responsibilities among family members important?*

b. **FHA/HERO:** Invite working parents to class to identify support systems they use in balancing work and family, such as those listed next. Following the presentation, create a display illustrating these support systems for a local mall, community center, or library.

(1) Extended family
(2) Child care providers
(3) Educational programs
(4) Workplace programs
(5) Flexible scheduling
(6) Housekeeping services
(7) Community services
(8) Personal management skills (stress, time, and money management)

c. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a panel of employers who are taking innovative steps to support their employees as they balance work and family. Ask the employers to explain how these policies came about and how employees can encourage workplaces to adopt policies that support families. Identify the various workplace strategies used and list the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy for the employer, the employee, and society.

(1) Flex time
(2) Parental leave policies
(3) Sick leave time to support family illness
(4) On-site child care
(5) Child care allowance
(6) Health care
(7) Job sharing opportunities

Discussion Questions

- *When you are looking for a potential employer, will you consider whether or not your future job will provide some of these opportunities? Why or why not?*
- *Which of these strategies were easiest for the employer to implement? Most difficult? Why?*
- *Which of these strategies seem to be most important to the employees? Why?*
- *Why do you think some employers are reluctant to implement policies that support families?*
- *Are any of the consequences of these strategies negative? How should we go about dealing with these negative consequences?*

d. In small groups, use the practical problem-solving process to resolve one of the situations related to family balancing work and family life below. Record your thinking on the **Practical Family Problems Think Sheet** (p. 29). Role-play your solution for the class. Justify your choice.

(1) A dual-career couple discussing who stays home when their child has chicken pox

(2) A single parent discussing with children who does the household chores when she is at work
(3) A single father choosing a child care center for his preschool daughter
(4) A couple trying to resolve a conflict caused by the wife's career obligation to attend a week-long conference in another state
(5) A couple discussing the best investment approach for their combined salaries

e. In Family Relations Research Teams, choose one of the case studies on **Balancing Work and Family Case Studies** (p. 260), and devise a plan for balancing work and family responsibilities in that family. Include plans for sharing household responsibilities, sharing family time together, and coordinating schedules. Present your plan to the class and identify criteria for evaluating the management of family and career responsibilities, such as those listed below.

(1) Reflects individual, family, and work-related priorities
(2) Reflects appropriate sharing of tasks, responsibilities, and performance standards
(3) Uses appropriate strategies to coordinate career and family responsibilities
(4) Ensures time for self, family, and work

f. **Action Project:** Observe or volunteer at a child care center or home care provider for one day. Observe how parents coordinate arriving and picking up children during the day and how the center supports the concept of working parents. Summarize your findings in a written report.

g. **Action Project:** Visit and evaluate a job-site day care program. Interview care providers, parents using the service, and employers to determine how the program affects job productivity. Share your findings in an oral report to the class.

h. **Action Project:** Create a plan to help your family coordinate work and family responsibilities. Include a plan for sharing household responsibilities, sharing family time together, and coordinating schedules. Keep a journal to describe how your plan is working. At the end of the project, write a short paper evaluating the effectiveness of your plan. Use the questions below to guide your evaluation.

(1) Does the amount of time your family spends on various responsibilities reflect what is important to them?
(2) What factors influence how your family balances work, family, and personal responsibilities?
(3) Was your plan successful in helping balance work and family responsibilities? Why or why not?

(4) What did your family like best about the plan? Least?
(5) Would you use the plan again? Why or why not?
(6) What actions will your family take in the future to manage work and family responsibilities?

i. Write a journal entry in your reflection notebook that describes your ideas about balancing work and family responsibilities. Use the items below to guide your reflection.

(1) The most influential trends affecting how people balance work and family roles are . . .
(2) Ways that these trends have influenced my family are . . .
(3) In my future family, I will balance work and family life by . . .
(4) Balancing work and family responsibilities is important because . . .

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Given case studies, explain how family and career goals are related in each situation.

2. Given examples of social, economic, and technological changes, analyze how each change has had an impact on work and family dynamics.

3. Given a family case study, develop strategies for sharing work and family responsibilities.

Classroom Experiences

1. In cooperative learning groups, choose a case study and identify the factors that influence how the family in your case study coordinates work and family responsibilities. Outline your simulated family's goals and values with regard to family and their goals and values with regard to work. List ten household responsibilities they will need to coordinate. Describe how their work responsibilities and household responsibilities might conflict given their goals and values.

2. Conduct a survey of families in your community. Compile your findings and draw conclusions about the interconnectedness of work and family life in your community.

3. Write a story about a time in your family when work life affected family or when something in your family affected work life.

4. In small groups, choose a trend affecting the interconnectedness of work and family life and design a poster illustrating that trend.

5. Design a display of products and appliances that were designed or improved in the last ten years in response to the trends related to balancing work and family roles.

6. In cooperative learning groups, choose a topic related to managing work and family responsibilities and research that topic. Prepare a presentation to the class to inform them about the topic.

7. In small groups, use the practical problem-solving process to resolve a situation related to balancing work and family life. Role-play your solution for the class. Justify your choice.

8. In cooperative learning groups, choose a case study, and devise a plan for balancing work and family responsibilities in that family. Include plans for sharing household responsibilities, sharing family time together, and coordinating schedules. Present your plan to the class and identify criteria for evaluating the management of family and career responsibilities.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Observe or volunteer at a child care center or home care provider for one day. Observe how parents coordinate arriving and picking up children during the day and how the center supports the concept of working parents. Summarize your findings in a written report.

2. Visit and evaluate a job-site day care program. Interview care providers, parents using the service, and employers to determine how the program affects job productivity. Share your findings in an oral report to the class.

3. Create a plan to help your family coordinate work and family responsibilities. Include a plan for sharing household responsibilities, sharing family time together, and coordinating schedules. Keep a journal to describe how your plan is working. At the end of the project, write a short paper evaluating the effectiveness of your plan.

Balancing Work and Family Case Studies

#1 The Simpsons are a blended family. Mr. and Mrs. Simpson recently married. Mr. Simpson has two children ages 5 and 7, and Mrs. Simpson has two children, ages 12 and 16. Mr. Simpson's children live with him on the weekends. Mr. Simpson teaches social studies at the local elementary school, and Mrs. Simpson owns and operates a children's clothing store at the mall. Frequently, Mrs. Simpson works evenings until 9:00 p.m.

Mr. Simpson wants to build a strong family. "In many ways, I feel like I'm starting all over again as a parent, but this time I don't get to know my new stepchildren as infants and small children first. They are teenagers now with busy schedules of practices and school activities. I feel like we really have to plan time together if I am going to get to know them. At the same time, my responsibilities at school have increased. I was just assigned as lead teacher of the social studies department and I will have more obligations outside the regular school day."

"We have some pretty big financial obligations to our family, so our jobs are important to us," says Mrs. Simpson. "My husband usually is home after school to be with the kids, fix dinner, and help with homework. Since my shop doesn't open until 10:00 a.m., I can usually take time to get them off to school and see them at breakfast. Since I am my own boss, if a really important event is going on in their lives, I organize my day to be able to be there for them. Scheduling can be very hectic, but it is important to make time for our children."

#2 Angie and Frank are married. Angie is an attorney and Frank is an engineer. Their combined income is well above average and they are able to purchase the basic things they need and want. They have an 8-year-old son, Jason, and a 10-year-old daughter, Michelle. Both children are exceptionally bright and active youngsters. Angie and Frank encourage them to participate in as many activities as possible as they believe this will help them excel. As one might imagine, Angie and Frank are extremely busy and rarely at home.

"It is important to us to be role models of career success to our children," says Angie. "We want Jason and Michelle to understand that they can be anything they want to be. Frank and I share many of the chores around the house and we expect our children to help, too."

Frank says, "Being an African-American family, we want to pass along our cultural heritage to our children. When we spend time together as a family, we share traditions that refelct our culture."

#3 Bonnie and Brad married ten years ago and have since had three children, ages eight, five, and three. Brad is a regional sales manager for a large company and travels extensively, usually being away from home at least four days a week. Brad's job pays well and he enjoys it. He is proud that he is able to support his family and that his wife is able to devote her time to raising their children and taking care of the house.

"Sometimes I often wonder where my time goes," says Bonnie. "I do all the housework, run the kids around to school, practices, and lessons. I volunteer in the community extensively. In fact, I have trouble saying no to anyone who asks me to do volunteer work. I really have very little time to myself, especially since Brad frowns on me getting a baby-sitter to watch the kids if I need to go out alone or with friends."

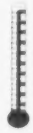
#4 Elaine has a son Mark who is 11 and a daughter Eva, who is 14. Elaine works full-time as the office manager for a group of doctors. Elaine has established household chores for Mark and Eva to do and they are given an allowance each week if the work is done. They are expected to use their allowance for spending money when they want to go to a movie or buy something that is above and beyond Elaine's budget limits. Eva has decided to babysit regularly for neighbors' children, and earns extra money that way, though she is frequently not at home on evenings and weekends.

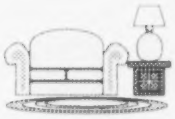
"I like my job," says Elaine. "It is challenging and I like the responsibility. When I am at work, I am so busy I rarely think of my kids. Mark usually calls me at work to tell me he is home from school, since Elaine is often babysitting. Our time together as a family is limited, but when we are together, we like to have fun."

Who Does Household Chores?

The following table represents the percentage of wives and husbands who report doing all or most of various household chores. Review the data in the table and answer the questions below.

	% WIVES	% HUSBANDS
Doing laundry	79	27
Preparing meals	78	26
Buying gifts for birthdays and holidays	78	24
Taking care of sick children*	78	10
Taking care of children on daily basis*	72	12
Doing grocery shopping	72	26
Cleaning house	69	22
Washing dishes	68	31
Paying bills	65	47
Making decisions about furniture and decor	60	18
Disciplining children*	42	28
Making decisions about savings or investments	38	41
Making decisions about vacations and entertainment	34	25
Keeping car in good condition	22	81
Doing yard work	21	63
Making home repairs	16	74





*Based only on those with children at home

1. Which five household tasks are women most likely to perform? Would you describe these tasks as being performed traditionally by women?

2. Which five household tasks are men most likely to perform? Would you describe these tasks as being performed traditionally by men?

3. What is the average percentage of household chores done by women? By men?

4. Based on these data, who is largely responsible for household chores in families?

5. Do these data surprise you? Why or why not?

6. What are the implications of these data for families in which both parents work full-time outside the home?

7. What changes do you predict in these data in the next ten years? Twenty years? Give reasons for your predictions.

Data compiled from *The Gallup Poll Monthly*, February 1990, p. 31.

Family Assessment: Traditional or Egalitarian?

Traditional beliefs and actions reflect a learned belief system where men's and women's work are distinctly different with men functioning as "breadwinners" and women as "homemakers." Egalitarian beliefs and actions reflect a belief system that encourages role sharing between men and women, discovering strengths in nontraditional areas, and striving for a more equal household work load between partners who both work outside the home.

The continuum below describes several degrees of these two belief systems. Where do you fall on this continuum?

Family Member	Traditional	Moderately Traditional	Moderately Egalitarian	Egalitarian
Responsibilities and Tasks	Believes that there is "men's work" and "women's work" and is not willing to break those traditions even if both partners work outside the home. Believes that the income provided as "breadwinner" is the man's contribution to family responsibilities.	Believes there is "men's work" and "women's work" but is willing to "help out" occasionally with tasks that are traditional to the opposite gender. Seldom initiates such tasks. Believes that the income provided by husband/father is a major contribution to family life, but involvement in other ways is needed as well.	Believes that men and women are capable of many tasks and behaviors traditional to both genders and is willing to share in nontraditional tasks. Believes that providing income is only a part of a man's total contribution to the family responsibilities, and that women can share as partners in the "provider" role.	Believes that no tasks beyond actual childbirth must be gender linked; shares in all types of activities and is willing to take primary responsibility for some nontraditional tasks. Is likely to initiate a nontraditional task without being asked and believes in a co-provider and partner relationship with working spouse.
Parenting Beliefs and Practices	Teaches and encourages children only in the areas traditionally thought to be acceptable behavior for their gender. Practices traditional child care/parenting roles, e.g., father serves primarily as the disciplinarian for the children, mother teaches, nurtures, etc.	Teaches and encourages traditional roles, but also is open to breaking some traditions (e.g., OK for boys to express "tender" feelings or for girls to be independent. Expects children first to be able to accomplish traditional tasks of their gender.	Teaches and sometimes encourages children to discover their own strengths and for both genders to express a wide range of feelings. Is comfortable with children learning nontraditional tasks and practices, some traditional and nontraditional child care/parenting roles.	Teaches and encourages children to discover their own strengths and feelings and to take responsibility and share in nontraditional household tasks. Shares actively in parenting roles and responsibilities.
Reaction to Role Sharing	Is highly uncomfortable and/or will react negatively to any pressure to do something not within one's own view of traditional gender roles and responsibilities. Does not ask for or expect help from the opposite gender partner or children.	Is somewhat uncomfortable when pressured to do something not within one's own view of traditional sex roles and responsibilities. Will often clarify that he or she is only "helping out" when doing a nontraditional task.	Is comfortable in doing nontraditional tasks. Is willing to share and negotiate tasks—seldom avoids a task because the opposite gender "should" do it.	Is very open and willing to share roles, is actively involved in working out an egalitarian lifestyle within the family.

Developed by Joan K. Comeau, Ph.D., Family Information Services, Minneapolis, MN. Originally published in *Balancing Work and Family*, a curriculum developed through the Minnesota Department of Vocational Technical Education.

How is Work Affecting Families?

Our Family Relations class is studying the effect of work on families. Your response to this survey will be helpful to us in identifying factors that most contribute to a balance between work and family responsibilities. Some questions only apply to those employed outside the home, but some apply to homemakers not employed outside the home. All responses will remain anonymous.

Are you:
- ❑ Male
- ❑ Female

Description of family situation:
- ❑ Married, one spouse works outside the home
- ❑ Married, both spouses work outside the home
- ❑ Single ❑ Other _____

Discription of children:
- ❑ Children, under age 18
- ❑ Children, over age 18
- ❑ No chidren

Questions for all families:

1. Do you feel that your spouse often is too involved with his or her work at the expense of the time your family spends together?
   ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ No spouse

2. How often do work or career pressures (yours or spouse's) create a serious strain on your marriage?
   ❑ Frequently ❑ Occasionally ❑ Never ❑ Does not apply

3. Which two or three of the following family-supportive benefits would you most like to see employers offer employees?
   - ❑ Day care for children
   - ❑ Equivalent family leave instead of sick leave
   - ❑ Flexible hours
   - ❑ The opportunity for two people to share a single job
   - ❑ Counseling for personal/family problems
   - ❑ Paternity leave as well as maternity leave
   - ❑ Four-day work week
   - ❑ Other

Questions to be answered by women and men who are employed outside the home:

4. How do you feel about your job?
   ❑ Like it very much ❑ It's OK ❑ Don't care for it ❑ Hate it ❑ Don't work outside the home

5. What do you like most about your job?
   - ❑ Good income/benefits/financial security
   - ❑ Creative satisfaction/fulfillment
   - ❑ Opportunity for professional growth
   - ❑ Stimulating work environment
   - ❑ Having adequate time and energy left for family and leisure
   - ❑ Producing a high-quality product or service
   - ❑ Recognition and advancement
   - ❑ Employment security
   - ❑ Job requirements match your abilities and interests
   - ❑ Good communication with coworkers
   - ❑ Making a meaningful contribution to society
   - ❑ Employer appreciates suggestions and initiative
   - ❑ Employer is fair and concerned about employee's well-being
   - ❑ Other _____

6. What do you dislike most about your job?
   - ❑ Repetitious, boring and/or exhausting work
   - ❑ Little opportunity for professional growth
   - ❑ Low pay
   - ❑ Worry about being laid off
   - ❑ Job requirements do not match your abilities
   - ❑ Conflicts with coworkers and business associates
   - ❑ Long hours and/or excessive job demands detract from time with family
   - ❑ Suggestions and initiative are stifled by employer
   - ❑ Feeling that your work isn't really appreciated
   - ❑ Feeling that employer is unfair and unconcerned about employees' well-being
   - ❑ None of the above
   - ❑ Other _____
   - ❑ Little opportunity for recognition and advancement
   - ❑ Annoying or hazardous physical surroundings
   - ❑ Little pride in the product/service involved
   - ❑ Inadequate benefits

How is Work Affecting Families? (*continued*)

7. Supposing you suddenly became financially secure for life, would you continue to work?
   - ❑ Yes, would continue doing same job
   - ❑ Yes, but would look for a different job
   - ❑ No
   - ❑ Don't know

8. In general, are you happier at home or at work?
   - ❑ Home
   - ❑ Work
   - ❑ Happy at both places
   - ❑ Happy at neither

9. When you are upset by a work situation, do you generally:
   - ❑ Discuss the problem with your spouse
   - ❑ Discuss the problem with a coworker or friend
   - ❑ Forget it when you're at home/deal with it when you get back to work
   - ❑ Become moody at home
   - ❑ Other

10. Does your family have a basic understanding of what your job is and what it means to you?
    - ❑ Yes
    - ❑ No
    - ❑ Don't know

11. Do you frequently work overtime and/or bring work home to do on evenings and/or weekends?
    - ❑ Yes
    - ❑ No

12. If you were given the option, would you prefer to do your present job in your home (rather than going to an office or plant every workday)?
    - ❑ Yes
    - ❑ No
    - ❑ Already work at or from home
    - ❑ Not possible to do present job at home

13. Some people who work outside the home may be envious of full-time homemakers because they believe homemakers have more time to do the things they want to do, more time to spend with their families, etc. Do you feel this way?
    - ❑ Yes
    - ❑ No
    - ❑ Sometimes

14. Overall, how would you assess you employer's attitude toward and/or effect on family life?
    - ❑ Is sensitive to and supportive of employees' family life
    - ❑ Contributes to tension and difficulty in family life
    - ❑ Doesn't have much effect one way or the other
    - ❑ Does not apply

Questions to be answered if both parents (or one parent if a single-adult household) are employed outside the home and there are children living at home:

15. How do you handle child care during work hours?
    - ❑ Baby-sitter comes to your home
    - ❑ Take children to baby-sitter
    - ❑ Take children to employer-sponsored day-care center
    - ❑ Take children to private or community day-care center
    - ❑ Let children take care of themselves
    - ❑ Work different hours; an adult is always home
    - ❑ Other _____

16. Are you satisfied that your children generally are getting enough parental attention event though their parents are working outside the home?
    - ❑ Yes
    - ❑ No

The Effects of Work on the Family

Work Affects Families By . . .

- Providing an economic means of existence
- Influencing the structure (scheduling) of family life
- Providing an avenue for personal satisfaction
- Requiring mobility
- Providing status
- Serving as a source of frustration that may carry over into family life

Families Affect Work By . . .

- Providing competent workers through development of capabilities and interpersonal competencies
- Serving as a source of frustration that may carry over into work life
- Restoring workers for their work roles by providing nutrition, relaxation, tension reduction, acceptance, and love

Source: S. Jorgensen and G. Henderson, *Dimensions of Family Life*. Cincinnati: South-Western Publishing Co., 1990.

Family Relations

Analyzing Social Forces Affecting Families

Module Overview

Practical Problem: What should I do about social forces affecting families?

Competency **5.0.8:** Analyze social forces that influence families across the life span

Competency Builders:

5.0.8.1 Identify social forces that influence families
5.0.8.2 Identify interdependent relationships between families and society
5.0.8.3 Analyze how laws and public and private policies affect families
5.0.8.4 Identify how families can become proactive in the legislative process
5.0.8.5 Evaluate global issues affecting families
5.0.8.6 Identify ethical and moral issues affecting families
5.0.8.7 Analyze how the economy affects families
5.0.8.8 Analyze how prejudices affect families
5.0.8.9 Develop strategies to address societal forces that influence families
5.0.8.10 Identify career opportunities that impact families

Supporting Concepts:

1. Social and global issues
2. Interdependent relationship between families and society
3. Legislation and the family
4. Prejudice and families
5. Career opportunities

Teacher Background Information

Rationale

Families and the larger social system are intimately interdependent. Strong families are able to monitor and assess social change in order to preserve their equilibrium. They are able to adapt to changes in the environment while preserving critical functions such as providing emotional support, promoting optimal development, and establishing a sense of continuity or connection between the individual and the community. Societies depend on families to socialize children so that they grow up having internalized the accepted values and practices of the society and being motivated to contribute to productive work. Societies also depend on families to provide essential nurturance and care for one another. Family members are not paid to carry out all the household work necessary to promote the health, safety, physical, and emotional well-being of the members, they just do it as part of their commitment and affection for one another. If one considers the costs when families cannot provide these functions, as when children are placed into

foster care or when older adults are institutionalized, it is painfully clear how expensive it is to try to replace basic family functions. Finally, society counts on families to function as consumers as well as producers. Families sustain the economy, not only by providing the labor force but by serving as one of the major markets for the products and services that the economy offers.

Although the most common approach to the study of family and society is to consider the ways that social forces impact on and modify families, one can also find numerous examples of ways that families use formal or informal means to influence other social institutions (Settles, 1987).

Background

American families are extremely diverse, comprised of different structures, varying ethnic and cultural backgrounds, having different levels of educational and occupational attainment, different religious beliefs, different values about family life, and different expectations about the role of society in guiding or influencing family life. As a result of these many differences, it is critical to appreciate that American families have different vulnerabilities to social forces. For example, in the late 1970s, the federal government shifted its policy of support for higher education, offering fewer scholarships and grants and more student loans. This had a proportionally greater negative effect on educational access for low income families than for middle and upper income students. In addition, minority students were especially hard hit by this policy since their families were less inclined to take out loans and probably had less access than white families to banks that would make these loans. As a result, the enrollment of low-income minority students in colleges and universities dropped substantially from 1978 to about 1985.

Most aspects of the society have an impact on families including the economy, the labor market, educational opportunities, laws and policies regarding employment, housing, health care, marriage, adoption, divorce, and inheritance. In addition, changing cultural norms about matters such as child rearing practices, gender roles, living arrangements, attitudes toward remaining single, attitudes toward the elderly, ideal age for marriage and childbearing, and ideal family size, all influence how people approach family decision-making and how they feel about their own family life.

In many instances, there is an interdependence or bi-directional influence between social forces and family systems. For example, in historical accounts of the process of industrialization in New England, the textile mills recruited workers from the rural areas through family contacts. Often young girls from the nearby farm area worked in the mills for one or two years, experiencing a period of independence from family life before marriage. These girls sent most of their earnings back to their family, thereby strengthening the financial security of the family-based farm while participating in building up the textile industry. Families would recruit friends and relatives from other areas to come work in the mills, thus contributing to the industrial labor force while strengthening kinship ties (Hareven, 1987; 1982).

In contemporary times, interdependence is well illustrated in the issue of child care. It is normative for married women with young children to be in the labor force. Yet, the United States does not have a comprehensive policy regarding the support of child care. In most communities, child care programs are not well regulated. The best quality programs are expensive, and typically, there are not enough spaces

for the number of children who need care. In addition, most child care services do not offer evening care or sick child care. Many families in which both mother and father are in the labor market have a complex arrangement for child care, often involving family members, center, and short-term babysitting (National Commission on Children, 1993). Large numbers of families have children in the care of older siblings or leave young children alone for several hours, especially between the time school lets out and when parents return from work (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1991). Many grandparents assume significant child care responsibilities for their grandchildren, especially in single-parent families. What is more, some families have adapted to the lack of adequate child care resources by increased development of home-based businesses, including the emergence of a large number of home-based family child care services. The point is that social policies which, at this time, prevent the development of a well-regulated, affordable, high quality child care system, place pressures on families. Families respond by creating a wide variety of child care arrangements, and, in some cases, by creating new entrepreneurial endeavors in order adapt to these social pressures (Holloway & Fuller, 1992).

Changes in laws and policies can have a strong impact on families. Concern about the increasing number of single, female-headed families who are in poverty has led to the exploration of a number of policy issues, one of which is child support. Current estimates find that about 60 percent of the custodial mothers in single-parent families have received some type of child support award. However, slightly less than half of these women receive the full amount of payment from the non-custodial fathers and about 25 percent receive nothing. Although the lack of child support is not the only factor that brings single, female-headed households into poverty, it appears to be a substantial factor (Teachman, 1991). Recent changes in federal legislation have strengthened the ability of states to intervene in the collection of child support payments. States have begun taking stronger measures to recover payments, and to make public the names of those who are delinquent in their payments. New policies are being considered that would increase the father's motivation to make payments, perhaps by providing some tax incentive, or by working harder to help couples negotiate a voluntary support arrangement that might be easier to enforce and with which the partners are more likely to comply.

Other laws, policies, and programs such as the family leave policy, social security and Medicare policies, welfare programs including WIC, ADC, food stamps, and subsidized housing, influence the ability of families to provide for their basic needs. Each of these policies, while offering some type of support to families, has eligibility features, limitations, and constraints that effect which families will take advantage of them. What is more, each policy can be evaluated for its costs and benefits to families as well as to the larger society. The current debate about welfare reform suggests that the objectives of many of these policies may not be fully realized, and that unintended negative consequences of some of the programs and policies make it impossible for some families to escape from poverty. Others argue that it is larger economic conditions, especially the growth or decline in the job market and the kinds of jobs that are available within a community, rather than specific government-sponsored family policies and programs that influence the growth of poverty for children and families (Aldous & Dumon, 1990).

Families are not simply shaped by the legislative process of laws, policies, and programs. As voters and tax payers, they can influence the direction of this process. However, families have their greatest impact when they come together around a specific issue. One of the most notable examples has been the effectiveness of

a group called MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Accidental deaths, especially deaths as a result of automobile accidents, are a leading cause of death for young children and adolescents. MADD has been influential in increasing awareness of the extent of the problem; changing laws about penalties for drunk driving; and changing attitudes about identifying a designated driver. MADD has developed advertisements that illustrate the risks of drunk driving, educational initiatives that help young people understand these risks, and recommendations for ways to prevent drunk driving. They have taken a primary role in bringing this problem to the forefront for family, community, and legislative action.

Another example is the involvement of grandparents in pursuing their rights to visitation with grandchildren following divorce. Many grandparents found that in the process of divorce, if their child became the non-custodial parent, then their access to their grandchildren was substantially reduced or denied altogether. Grandparents have taken steps to influence divorce policies so that they can retain their own visitation privileges with their grandchildren, regardless of the custodial role of their children.

Families are influenced by global issues beyond the laws, policies, and programs of their own state or nation. Issues such as world hunger, wasted resources, water and air pollution, and the international economy all have the potential for affecting family life. Probably the most dramatic example of how global issues effect families is war. During wars, family members may be separated, injured, or killed. Homes and communities are destroyed. Schooling is disrupted. People may leave their towns and villages to escape violence, thus disrupting family and community bonds. We have seen the powerful effects of war on U. S. military families. Family members leave their loved ones to go off to war. Family members experience grief over separation. We note continuing chronic effects of having been in the war including exposure to health risks, and long-term stress reactions which may result in the inability to function normally upon return. Families of those MIAs (missing in action) have continued to press for further investigation about their loved ones. On the positive side, many soldiers experience a new sense of global consciousness as a result of their involvement. They bring a new world view to their families that alters their outlook on their own national citizenry.

Ethical and moral issues that surface during a particular period of history affect families. In our own time, ethical debates about abortion; care of the elderly; school desegregation and busing; and the control of toxic wastes and environmental pollution are examples of issues that influence family decision making and can directly effect families.

Some families are the targets of prejudice and discrimination in a community. This may have the impact of reduced self-esteem, reduced educational and economic opportunities, and a reduced sense of empowerment to provide the kind of family life they desire. Some families are prejudiced. They try to maintain their own sense of self worth by degrading or negating others. They restrict their contact with other families, set very strict boundaries on family members, and function in a limited social sphere. Rather than coping with the true source of their conflicts and problems, they preserve a fragile equilibrium by displacing their anger and shame onto others. Families and communities suffer and stagnate when they are dominated by high levels of prejudice and discrimination.

Analyzing Social Forces Affecting Families

Families can be exposed to institutional practices, such as sexism, racism, and ageism, as well as prejudices against their ethnic group, socioeconomic status, religious background, or other characteristics. Long-held practices, often of an informal nature, preserve a preferential pattern of access and advancement that effects the aspirations, economic resources, and socioeconomic mobility of families. These patterns of institutional discrimination may be observed in schools, the workplace, the legal system, and in city, state, and local government. Families can challenge these practices, but it requires great personal determination and a willingness to challenge community norms to bring institutional injustices of this type to light.

References

Aldous, J., & Dumon, W. (1990). Family policy in the 1980s: Controversy and consensus. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 52*, 1136-1151.

Hareven, T. K. (1982). *Family time and industrial time*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hareven, T. K. (1987). Historical analysis of the family. In M. B. Sussman & S. K. Steinmetz (Eds.). *Handbook of Marriage and the Family*. New York: Plenum, p. 37-57.

Holloway, S. D., & Fuller, B. (1992). The great child-care experiment: What are the lessons for school improvement? *Educational Researcher, 21*, 12-19.

National Commission on Children. (1993). *Just the facts: A summary of recent information on American's children and their families*. Washington, DC: National Commission on Children.

Settles, B. H. (1987). A perspective on tomorrow's families. In M. B. Sussman & S. K. Steinmetz (eds.). *Handbook of Marriage and the Family*. New York: Plenum, p. 157-180.

Teachman, J. D. (1991). Who pays? Receipt of child support in the United States. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53*, 759-772.

U. S. Bureau of the Census. (1991). *Statistical abstract of the United States: 1991*, (111th Ed.). Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

CONTENT MODULE 8

Analyzing Social Forces Affecting Families

Learning Activities

Teacher Note: The activities under this section of the module can be conducted near the beginning of the Family Relations course. The Social Issues Affecting Families Assignment can be established as an ongoing project throughout the course, including not only the classroom presentation but FHA/HERO community service projects and Action Projects as well. Group presentations could be given at different times during the semester, depending on their relationship to other module topics. The activities under 2. Interdependent Relationship Between Families and Society and 3. Legislation and the Family could be culminating activities for the social issues project.

1. Social and global issues

a. On the chalkboard, list all the social issues you can think of that affect families. For each issue you identify, explain ways you believe that particular issue affects families. Read **Social Forces Affecting Families** (p. 280-281) and explain how the forces described on the handout might affect the social issues on your list.

Discussion Questions
- *Do you see any of these social issues in your community?*
- *How is your family affected by these forces?*
- *Which forces do you see as negative and which are positive?*

b. Using **Social Issues Affecting Families Assignment Sheet** (p. 282), form cooperative groups and complete a social issues project.

Teacher Note: Examples of social issues project ideas are included on **Domestic Violence: Issues and Action** (p. 283-284) and **Gangs—What Can Families Do?** (p. 285). Students could choose learning activities from these examples or apply the same learning activities to their chosen topic.

c. In the cooperative learning groups you formed in the previous activity, choose a goal that is related to the family issue you selected for your project, such as those listed below. Identify as many alternatives as possible for achieving that goal. Share your alternatives with the class and identify one or two you would consider implementing.

(1) Eliminate poverty
(2) End violence
(3) Eliminate hunger
(4) Implement technology
(5) End the spread of AIDS

d. Write a paragraph about what families will be like in the future. In small groups, share your paragraphs and develop a description of families in the year 2010. Explain how the issues affecting today's families you identified in Activity 1a will or will not be affecting families in the year 2010.

Discussion Questions
- *Will future families be stronger? Healthier? Why or why not?*
- *What issues will the families of the future face?*
- *What will future families have in common with today's families? What will be different?*
- *What ethical issues do your predictions create?*

e. Play **The Great Exchange** (p. 286).

Discussion Questions
- *How did you decide what to keep and what to trade?*
- *Were you surprised at what you ended up with? Why or why not?*
- *Why did you choose to keep the items you did? How do these items represent what is most important to you?*
- *Did your choices change when money or time was an issue?*
- *If you were doing this activity on behalf of your family, would you make the same choices?*
- *What would happen if everyone made the same choices?*
- *How would the choices you made impact social forces affecting families?*

f. **FHA/HERO:** Choose a social issue affecting families and design a community service project focused on that issue.

g. **Action Project:** Volunteer at a community agency that addresses a social issue affecting families. Keep a journal of your experiences and write a report summarizing the impact this agency is making with regard to this issue.

2. Interdependent relationship between families and society

a. Design a chart with two columns. On one side, list ways society affects families. On the other side, list ways that families affect society. Complete **Forming Our World** (p. 288).

Discussion Questions
- *What would happen if families did not support society?*
- *What would happen if society did not support families?*
- *In what ways has society supported your family?*
- *In what ways has your family supported the community?*

b. Read **The Family As A System** (p. 289). Create a simulation of the concept of systems thinking by drawing circles to represent each system on the bottom of a rubber dish pan. Fill the pan with water and toss in objects of different size and/or weights to examine the ripple effect. Relate this simulation as to how an event in one system and have an impact on other systems. An alternative simulation activity is to use a mobile to show how different types of movements affect all parts of the mobile. Answer the questions below. Share your responses with the class.

(1) What are some things the political system does that affects the family?
(2) What are some things families could do that could have an effect on the political system?
(3) What are factors in the economic system that affect families?
(4) What are ways that families could affect the economic system?
(5) In what ways does out sociocultural system affect families?
(6) In what ways do families affect the society or culture in which they live?
(7) In what ways does technology affect families?
(8) How can families take advantage of or affect the technological system?

Discussion Questions
- *What do each of these systems contribute to the family system?*
- *What does the family system contribute to the remaining systems?*
- *What would happen to each of the systems if the family system did not exist?*

c. Design a bulletin board for the classroom entitled, "Families Can Make a World of Difference." Use a large globe and label it with global issues on which families can make an impact, such as those listed below. Add newspaper and magazine articles and case studies to the bulletin board with specific examples as to how families are making an impact on these global issues.

(1) Abuse and family violence
(2) Hunger
(3) Poverty
(4) Homelessness
(5) Pollution and wasted natural resources
(6) Education
(7) Health

3. Legislation and the family

a. In cooperative learning groups, research specific laws and public policies related to the issue affecting families you selected in Activity 1a. Examples of such issues are listed below. Identify how the policies or laws related to this issue affect families and society. Explain whether or not you think the policies and laws are good ones and whether or not you would try to change them. Present your findings to the class.

(1) Divorce and child custody
(2) Family violence
(3) Health care reform
(4) Affirmative Action
(5) Adoption (including adoption of children from a foreign country)
(6) Food safety
(7) Public assistance for families

Discussion Questions
- *Why do you think each of the pieces of legislation you studied came about?*
- *Is the legislation you studied beneficial to families? If so, how?*
- *Why should you be aware of legislation affecting families?*

Teacher Note: This activity should be a culminating experience for the social issues project described in Activity 1b. Resources for the activity above can be obtained from your local Legal Aid Society or Bar Association. Librarians can also be helpful in identifying resources in the school or community library.

b. Obtain a copy of the Bill of Rights and identify rights guaranteed to citizens of the United States. Explain how each of these rights might apply to families.

c. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a legislator, lobbyist, or community activist to class to explain the process of creating and changing legislation, and ways that constituents can have an impact on that process. Following the presentation, choose one or more of the activities below.

(1) Design a visual representation of the steps in creating legislation and making laws
(2) Take a field trip to the State Legislature to meet with representatives and hear their views on issues related to families
(3) Take a field trip to observe a trial in session that involves a family issue
(4) Create a display on the legislative process involving a family issue
(5) Develop a directory of current legislators and other elected officials from your area

Discussion Questions
- *Why is it important to be aware of how you as an individual can impact the legislative process?*
- *What is the most important thing your chapter learned about the legislative process?*
- *Are legislators interested in your views as a future voter? Why or why not?*

d. Draft a letter to a legislator concerning your views on proposed legislation affecting families. In pairs, share letters and provide constructive feedback about writing a final draft. Send the letters and share any response you get from legislators.

e. **Action Project:** Call a legislation hotline and determine the status of legislation on a family issue of interest to you. Write your legislator about the proposed bill. Keep a record of the response you get from your legislator.

4. Prejudice and families

a. Using resources, define *prejudice*. Working with a Language Arts teacher, choose adolescent literature that reflects issues of prejudice, such as short stories, novels, or biographies. Read and react to the literature examples. Identify characteristics that can be used as the basis of prejudice, such as those listed below. View a videotape about an individual who has experienced prejudice (such as Ryan White or Stephen Beko) to gain an understanding of the impact of prejudice on individuals and families.

(1) Gender
(2) Age
(3) Race
(4) Socioeconomic status
(5) Health or handicapping condition
(6) Physical appearance

Discussion Questions
- *What are the consequences of prejudice for families? For society?*
- *Why do prejudicial attitudes exist?*
- *How does it feel to experience prejudicial behavior?*

b. Design a discrimination box for the classroom. Create examples of situations when family members are affected by prejudice. Write the situations on index cards and place them in the discrimination box. Read **Guidelines for Challenging Racism and Other Forms of Oppression** (p.290). Select cards from the box, read the situations aloud to the class and describe the feelings that might be experienced by everyone involved in that situation. In small groups, select one of the situations and role play it for the class illustrating a response to prejudice. Following the role play, share your reasoning for deciding to resolve the situation as you did in the role play.

Discussion Questions
- *How did you go about deciding how to respond to the situations?*
- *What feelings were experienced?*

- *Was the behavior in the role play ethical? Why or why not?*
- *What skills do families need to deal with prejudice?*
- *What are the consequences of persistent prejudice?*

Teacher Note: The above role play strategy is important for students to develop empathy and confidence in confronting prejudicial behavior. Emphasize that students must be advocates for themselves and others when they notice the dignity, equality, and safety of others is being violated by prejudicial behavior.

c. Interview grandparents and older community members about prejudice and stereotypes that existed during their youth, how these have changed over time, new stereotypes that have occurred, and how they would compare attitudes of the youth of their era to those of today. Share your findings with the class.

Discussion Questions
- *Which stereotypes and prejudices seem to be the same as those that existed 50 years ago? Which seem to be different?*
- *What causes stereotypes and prejudices to change over time?*
- *What strategies can change stereotypes and prejudices?*

d. **FHA/HERO:** Survey your community regarding prejudice or stereotypes that might exist. Examine your findings and plan a community awareness project to highlight existing prejudicial behavior and suggest ways to overcome it.

5. **Career opportunities**

a. View **Family Living and Social Services Careers** (p. 291). In small groups, make a list of skills needed for these jobs. Identify things that you have learned or skills you have developed in this Family Relations class that could help you succeed if you chose one of these careers.

b. Using information from the U. S. Department of Labor, identify statistics about the fastest-growing jobs for the next ten years. Display in the classroom and identify those that are related to strengthening or supporting families. In cooperative learning groups, choose one of the careers and research information about education and training needed, salary ranges, opportunities for advancement, and professional responsibilities associated with that career. Share your findings with the class.

Discussion Questions
- *What are the consequences of selecting one of these careers?*
- *How do each of these careers assist families?*
- *Are you interested in entering any of these careers? Why or why not?*

c. **FHA/HERO:** Invite a panel of professionals who work in various careers related to families. Ask panel members to share information about their careers and their experiences in dealing with families.

Discussion Questions

- *What are the rewards of the various careers represented on the panel? The drawbacks?*
- *What education and training is required for these jobs?*
- *How do these career choices impact families?*

d. **Action Project:** Choose a career of interest to you and research information about that career. Job shadow a professional in the field and interview that person about his or her job. Develop a written report of your findings.

Assessment

Paper and Pencil

1. Identify at least five social forces that influence families.
2. Identify the interdependent relationship between families and society by describing three ways that families influence society and three ways that society influences families.
3. Given examples of laws and public and private policies, analyze how each affects families by identifying the consequences of that law or policy on families.
4. Identify at least two ways that families can become proactive in the legislative process.
5. Evaluate global issues affecting families by identifying at least three consequences for each issue.
6. Identify at least three ethical and moral issues affecting families.
7. Given case studies, analyze how the economy affects families in each situation.
8. Given case studies, analyze how prejudices affect families in each situation.
9. Develop at least two strategies to address societal forces that influence families.
10. Identify at least three career opportunities that impact families.

Analyzing Social Forces Affecting Families

Classroom Experiences

1. In cooperative learning groups, choose a social issue affecting families and complete a written report and oral presentation about that issue.

2. Write a paragraph about what families will be like in the future.

3. In cooperative learning groups, choose an issue affecting families and research the specific laws and policies related to that issue. Identify how the policies or laws related to this issue affect families and society. Explain whether or not you think the policies and laws are good ones and whether or not you would try to change them. Present your findings to the class.

4. Draft a letter to a legislator concerning your views on proposed legislation affecting families. In pairs, share letters and provide constructive feedback about writing a final draft. Send the letters and share any response you get from legislators.

5. Interview grandparents and older community members about prejudice and stereotypes that existed during their youth, how these have changed over time, new stereotypes that have occurred, and how they would compare attitudes of the youth of their era to those of today. Share your findings with the class.

6. In cooperative learning groups, choose a career related to families and research information about education and training needed, salary ranges, opportunities for advancement, and professional responsibilities associated with that career. Share your findings with the class.

Application to Real-life Settings

1. Volunteer at a community agency that addresses a social issue affecting families. Keep a journal of your experiences and write a report summarizing the impact this agency is making with regard to this issue.

2. Call a legislation hotline and determine the status of legislation on a family issue of interest to you. Write your legislator about the proposed bill. Keep a record of the response you get from your legislator.

3. Choose a career of interest to you and research information about that career. Job shadow a professional in the field and interview that person about his or her job. Develop a written report of your findings.

Social Forces Affecting Families

A. *Diversity is increasing, both ethnic diversity and diversity in living arrangements.*

B. *Changing employment opportunities.* Globalization, technological advances, etc. are changing employment opportunities. (e.g., fewer unskilled/semi-skilled jobs, more service jobs). Greater need to "anticipate" job changes (average of four to five times during working lifetime; second and third careers becoming more common) and budget dollars and time for job training, retraining, and transitioning.

C. *Average household size down.* Average household size down (3.67 in 1940; 2.65 in 1991); increase in very young and elderly living alone; more single parents and more dual-career families with partners working in different locations.

Also increase in multi-generational households (boomerangs).

D. *Elderly population increasing.* More families need to address a wide variety of issues relating to "planning for growing old."

E. *More children with parents in the workforce.* Increasing numbers of these children are cared for by an adult who is not a relative. Children are becoming increasingly isolated from adults and their problems. Two-income couples are seldom available to discuss adult problems in the children's hearing.

F. *More children live in poverty.* In 1970, 5 percent of children lived in poverty as compared to 15.4 percent in 1990.

G. *Family structures are becoming more diverse.* In periods of economic difficulty, children and grandchildren move back in with parents and grandparents to save on living expenses. Growing numbers of grandparents are raising their grandchildren, partly because drugs and AIDS have left the middle generation either unable, or unavailable, to care for their children

Among the poor, grandparents are also providing live-in day care for the children of single mothers trying to gain an education or build a career. Yet, the nuclear family is also rebounding, as baby-boom parents adopt "family values" and grandparents retain more independence and mobility.

H. *Societal values are changing rapidly.* The "me" ethic of the 1980s has already been replaced by the "we" ethic and a new "family" ethic has begun to appear. Family issues will dominate the 1990s: long-term health care, day care, early childhood education, anti-drug campaigns and drug-free environments.

(continued)

Source: Data compiled by Joyce Fittro, Ohio State University Extension Specialist, Delaware County. Principal resource: *World Future Society, An American Renaissance In The Year 2000: 74 Trends That Will Affect America's Future.* Bethesda, Maryland.

Social Forces Affecting Families *(continued)*

I. *Women's labor rate keeps rising.* Employment rate of women keeps rising (57.5 percent in 1990, 62 percent by 2000); more women starting small businesses; two-income couples becoming the norm (38 percent in 1980; 47 percent in 1991; 75 percent by 2000). "Housework" an increasing challenge (average employed woman spends 26 hours per week doing household work in addition to paid employment).

J. *More workers earning less.* Ohio unemployment (January, 1991) stable at 6.1 percent with U. S. at 6.7 percent. Rising percentage of those working full time but earning less than the poverty level for a four-person family. Single heads of households increasingly common–many are the "new poor"; trend toward lower wages (especially for young workers and those without college degrees).

K. *Greater income variability.* U. S. family median income down. Smaller share of income going to poor families, larger share going to affluent. Greater financial struggles for low-income families; greater tax pressures on middle- and higher-income families to assist poor and to support an increasing array of "public" needs. Continuing financial challenge to "make ends meet;" higher financial "pressures" can trigger a complex of other challenges (emotional, physical, and social).

L. *The work ethic is vanishing from American society.* Tardiness is increasing. Sick leave abuse is common. Job security and high pay are not the motivators they once were. In a 1992 poll of the under-thirty population, 38 percent said that being corrupt was "essential" in getting ahead.

M. *Technology will increasingly dominate both the economy and society.* Personal robots will appear in the home by 2000.

N. *The nutrition and wellness movements will spread, raising life expectancy.* Since the turn of the century, every generation has lived three years longer than the last. In this generation, better diet, exercise, and the new emphasis on prevention will extend that to five years. By 2050, look for a breakthrough in aging research to provide 115 to 120 years of vigorous good health.

O. *Greater linkage of computers with global telecommunications networks in the next three to five years.* Seventy percent of U. S. homes will have computers by 2001 compared to 30 percent now. Families will use computers to vote, file income tax returns, purchase products, take classes, and manage financial accounts. Portable computers will give families wireless access to networked data wherever they go. Access likely to be limited for some limited-resource families.

P. *Americans will regain their leisure time in the 1990s, and then some.* Computerized manufacturing will result in a shorter average work week.

Social Issues Affecting Families Assignment Sheet

About This Assignment

This assignment is designed to help you think critically about a social issue affecting families. It is a cooperative project to be completed by your Family Relations Research Team. Your project activities should result in

- A written report between four to six pages in length
- An oral presentation on the topic to the class
- Additional project activities to be designed by your group, such as
  - — Posters or displays about the topic for your classroom, school, or community
  - — Research into legislation and policies related to your issue
  - — Written contact with legislators or community activists regarding your issue
  - — FHA/HERO community service projects designed around your issue
  - — Action projects related to your issue

Steps in Planning Your Project

1. Cooperatively select a current issue relating to the family.
2. Establish the goals for your project, including goals for your written report, oral presentation, and additional activities.
3. Write an action plan for achieving these goals, explaining each group member's role in completing project activities. Some activities may be done by all members of the group, while other activities may be done by only one member. For example, the work for the written report and oral presentation may be divided as follows:

   All — Read and do research
   Take notes
   Write a section of the paper
   Present a section of the oral presentation
   Manager — encourages, divides paper into sections keep all on task
   Recorder —collect notes and make outline
   Reporter— coordinates the oral presentation
   Reference Person — compiles reference list

4. Turn in written action plans to your teacher.

Assessing the Assignment

Working with members from other groups, establish the criteria you will use to assess your work at the end of the project. Generate a list of criteria, which may include some of the areas of assessment listed below. Assign point values or develop rubric scoring for each criteria. Following the project, assess your work using the criteria. Compare your assessment of the project with your teacher's assessment of your work.

Group Cooperation and Attainment of Project Goals
- Shared Responsibility
- Fulfilled Individual Duties
- Resolved Conflict
- Good Use of Resources

Quality of Written Paper
- Substance
- References

Oral Presentation
- Substance
- Creativity in Presentation
- Quality of Presentation

Additional Project Activities
- Meaningful to Issue
- Sufficient in Quantity

Domestic Violence: Issues and Action

If you chose domestic violence as the subject of your Social Issues Affecting Families Assignment, the sample learning experiences below are possible project activities. Select those activities that will help your group meet the project requirements and achieve your group goals.

Collect newspaper and magazine articles about the issue of domestic violence. Create a poster to illustrate the problem. Highlight statistics that illustrate the scope of the problem. Interview a representative from a local shelter for victims of abuse or from a social service agency to identify local statistics, explain the impact of this problem on families and on the community, and identify services available for victims of abuse.

Think about . . .
- *Why should we be concerned about domestic violence?*
- *What are the consequences of this problem for individuals, families, and society?*
- *What knowledge do we need to take action about this problem?*

Divide the topics listed below among your group members and use classroom and community resources to research each topic. Develop a class presentation to share your information, including ways to creatively present your findings to the class.

1. Types of abuse (such as verbal, sexual, economic, and emotional)
2. The cycle of abuse
3. The use of power and control in abusive families as opposed to healthy families
4. Reasons why family members might stay in abusive relationships (such as economics, children, societal expectations, denial, fear, or low self-esteem)
5. What happens to family members who are raised in violent homes
6. Strategies for dealing with domestic violence in a family (such as sources of support, community resources, and legal recourse)

Think about . . .
- *Does this information confirm or conflict with what you previously knew about domestic violence?*
- *Why is it important to understand this information as we decide what to do about domestic violence?*
- *How will this information influence our actions?*

(continued)

Domestic Violence: Issues and Action *(continued)*

Make a list of statements that reflect beliefs or standards that perpetuate the problem of domestic violence. Examples are listed below, though you may be able to think of others to add (A helpful resource for this activity is *Violence Against Women: Opposing Viewpoints Series*, Greenhaven Press, San Diego, California, 1994).). Assign one of the statements to each member of your group and critique it by identifying the short-term and long-term consequences of this belief or standard on the issue of domestic violence. Write a new statement related to that belief or standard that would support the prevention of domestic violence. Share your list of consequences and new statement with the rest of the group.

1. Hitting others is an acceptable way to express feelings of anger or stress.
2. The male is "master of the castle" and can use that power to control other members of the family or treat them as servants.
3. Children need their father even if he is violent.
4. Occasional incidents of battering are probably not serious and should not be considered abuse.
5. A woman who is battered by her husband probably deserved it.
6. Domestic violence is mostly a problem in low-income minority families.

Think about . . .

- *Are each of these beliefs or standards in our best interest? The best interests of families? Why or why not?*
- *Do these beliefs or standards have more positive or more negative consequences?*
- *What do the new beliefs or standards you have written have in common?*
- *How can these new beliefs or standards support the prevention of domestic violence?*

As an FHA/HERO activity, interview a representative from the local prosecutor's office that deals regularly with domestic violence cases. Ask the representative to highlight the state and federal laws affecting domestic violence issues and explain the process involved in investigating and prosecuting such cases. Think about . . .

- *What problems do local officials face in investigating and prosecuting domestic violence cases?*
- *Do the penalties for domestic violence fit the crime? Why or why not?*
- *What are the consequences of the existing laws for individuals? Families? Society?*

As an FHA/HERO activity, plan a local service project to raise money or collect needed items for an abuse shelter in your community.

As an Action Project, call a legislation hotline and determine the status of legislation regarding domestic violence. Write a letter to state or federal legislators about your views on the proposed legislation. Send the letter and keep a record of return responses.

Gangs–What Can Families Do?

If you chose street gangs as the focus of your Social Issues Affecting Families Assignment, the sample learning experiences below are possible project activities. Select those activities that will help your group meet the project requirements and achieve your group goals.

Select a videotape that tells a story about street gangs. Show the videotape, or excerpts of it, to your class. Following the tape, make a chart and list the consequences of gang involvement for individuals, families, and society. Think about . . .

- *Why should we be concerned about gang involvement?*
- *What might happen if gang involvement continues to grow in our country?*
- *What knowledge do we need to take action about this problem?*

Divide the topics listed below among your group members and use classroom and community resources to research each topic. A good reference for this activity is *Gangs–What Can Parents Do?* by Dan Bond, Deb Drain, & Suzanne Simonson, Snohomish County Gangs Task Force, Everett, Washington. You should also be able to find many articles in newspapers and magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U. S. News & World Report*. Develop a class presentation to share your information, including ways to creatively present your findings to the class.

1. Definition of gangs (a group of individuals who associate together for a common purpose, usually to the exclusion of others, and participate in criminal and anti-social activity)
2. The activities of gangs (claim turf, have gang names, have gang colors, use hand signs, do graffiti, dress in a particular manner, use tattoos, participate in criminal activity)
3. Why young people say they are attracted to gangs, such as
   - sense of family
   - involvement in something
   - respect–people look up to you
   - there is nothing to do
   - protection/security
   - sense of belonging
   - status
   - money
   - easy and cheap access to drugs
   - friendship
   - excitement
   - curiosity
   - ignorance
   - media promotes and glamorizes gang members as heroes
   - self-esteem—makes me feel like someone important
4. Possible signs of gang involvement
5. What families can do to prevent family members from feeling the need for gang involvement

Think about . . .

- *Does this information confirm or conflict with what you previously knew about street gangs?*
- *Why is it important to understand this information as we decide what to do about street gangs?*
- *How will this information influence our actions?*

Invite a panel of community members to class to discuss what is being done in your community to deal with gang involvement. Panelists might include law enforcement officers, social workers, former gang members, or community activists such as parents taking action against gangs in the community. Develop a set of questions to ask panel members. Think about . . .

- *What problems do local officials face in dealing with gang involvement?*
- *What action is being taken by community activists concerning gang involvement?*
- *What are the consequences of these actions for the individuals, their families, and society?*

Call a legislation hotline and inquire about legislation that may be pending (such as gun control, law enforcement, or control or illegal substances such as drugs that may effect gang involvement). Write a letter to legislators explaining your position on the pending legislation.

The Great Exchange

The purpose of this game is to think about what is important to you in relation to families, and how those values might influence your response to social issues affecting families.

Preparation: Make **The Great Exchange Cards** (p. 287). If possible, make each type of card a different color. Distribute five of each card to each player.

Goal of the Game: To trade cards with other players to obtain the most number of cards of the item you most value. After the exchanges, you will have an opportunity to discuss the factors that influence your values in relation to families.

Round 1:

Trade your cards to obtain the most number of cards of the item(s) you most value. Stop trading after two minutes.

Keep and make a record of the cards you have at the end of the round.

Round 2:

As a group, assign an amount of time to each type of card (for example, four hours for investing in time with family, and one hour for personal time). Based on the time you would like to spend with regard to the topic on each card, trade your cards to obtain the most number of cards based on how you would most like to spend your time. Stop trading after two minutes.

Keep and make a record of the cards you have at the end of the round.

Round 3:

As a group, assign an amount of money to each type of card. Based on the cost of the items on each card, trade your cards to obtain the most number of cards according to how you would most like to spend your money. Stop trading after two minutes.

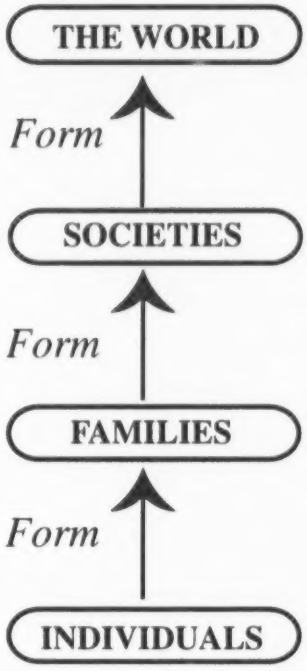
Keep and make a record of the cards you have at the end of the round.

The Great Exchange Cards

TECHNOLOGY • Computers • High Tech Equipment	CHILDREN • Represents the number you would like to have
INCOME • Earned • Inherited	TIME WITH FAMILY • Recreation • Work at home
GOODS AND SERVICES • Goods • Car • Clothes • Food	PERSONAL TIME • Recreation • Physical health • Emotional well-being
CAREER INVOLVEMENT • Local • Growth/Challenge	HOUSING • Materials • Space • Style

Forming Our World

Study the chart below. In small groups, discuss the questions below. Share your responses with the class.



What would be the effect on families, on our society, and on the world if . . .

1. No families had children?
2. Most families had six to eight children?
3. There were no laws?
4. All families were concerned about the kinds of laws we have and worked to see that laws protecting families and children were enacted?
5. There was a world war?
6. A large number of families did not have the financial resources to provide basic needs for family members?
7. Families taught family members to look out for themselves without thinking of the consequences of their behavior on others?
8. High-quality child care were provided for all working parents?
9. There were no child abuse?
10. Families taught children to conserve our natural resources?

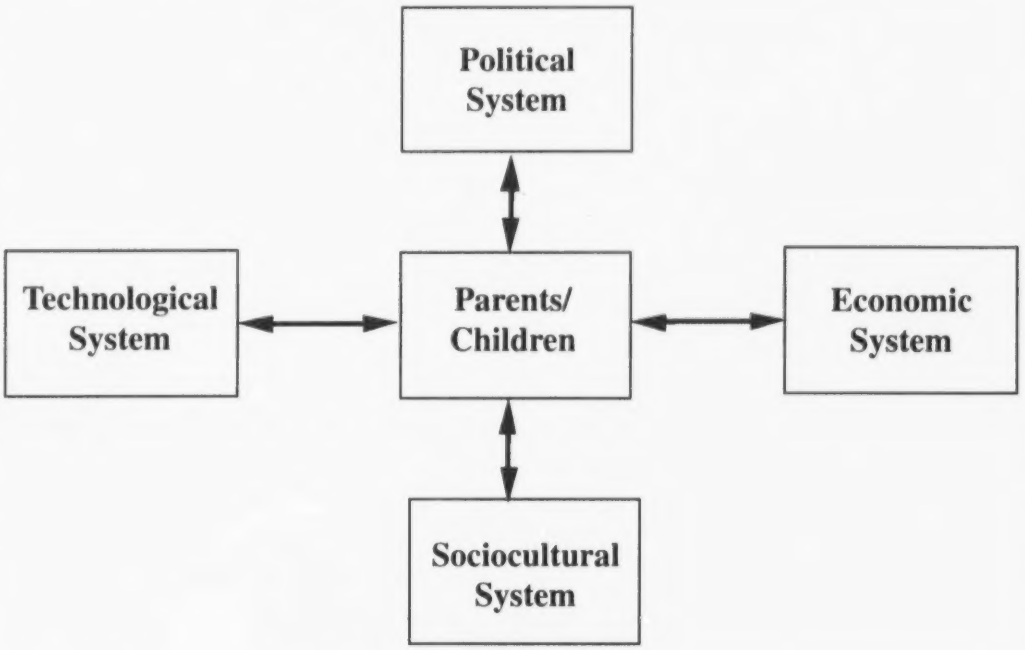
Adapted from: West Virginia Department of Education, *Parent Education Curriculum.* Ripley, West Virginia: West Virginia Technology Resource Center, 1990.

The Family as a System

A system includes objects and events that are related in their purpose and depend on each other to function. All the parts of a system are interrelated, interconnected, and interdependent. A change in one part of a system can affect several things at once.

The family system includes all members of a family and their roles and responsibilities. Activities a family does to support each other, such as meeting physical needs or needs for love and belonging as part of that system.

In the diagram, several other systems are included that have an impact on the family system.



The political system includes government activities and such as education, public services, and courts. Regulations and laws established by state, federal, and local governing bodies are a part of this system.

The technological system includes machines, computers, television, and telephones.

The economic system includes the world of paid employment, and organizations that offer goods and services for sale. Wages and prices are determined by this system.

The sociocultural system includes the ideas, beliefs, values, and customs or traditions of a culture.

These systems interact to influence each other. For instance, government passes laws that affect families. In turn families provide the economic support for government through taxes.

Guidelines for Challenging Racism and Other Forms of Oppression

1. **Challenge discriminatory attitudes and behavior!** Ignoring the issues will not make them go away and silence can send the message that you are in agreement with such attitudes and behaviors. Make it clear that you will not tolerate racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual jokes or slurs, or any actions that demean any person or group. Your intervention may not always take place at the exact time or place of the incident, but it must be addressed promptly.

2. **Expect tension and conflict and learn to manage it.** Sensitive and deep-seated issues are unlikely to change without some struggle and in many situations, conflict is unavoidable. Face your fears and discomforts and remember that tension and conflict can be positive forces that foster growth.

3. **Be aware of your own attitudes, stereotypes, and expectations** and be open to discovering the limitations they place on your perspective. We have all been socialized to believe many myths and misconceptions and none of us remain untouched by the discriminatory messages in our society. Be honest with yourself about your own prejudices and biases. If you do not know something, or are not sure how to handle a situation, say so, and seek the information or help that you need. Practice not getting defensive when discriminatory attitudes or behaviors are pointed out to you.

4. **Actively listen to and learn from others' experiences.** Don't minimize, trivialize, or deny people's concerns and make an effort to see situations through their eyes.

5. **Use language and behavior that is non-biased and inclusive** of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, disabilities, sexual orientation, class, age, or religion.

6. **Provide accurate information to challenge stereotypes and biases.** Take responsibility for educating yourself about your own and other's cultures. Do not expect people from different backgrounds to always educate you about their culture, history, or to explain racism or sexism to you. People are more willing to share when you take an active role and the learning is mutual.

7. **Acknowledge diversity and avoid stereotypical thinking.** Don't ignore or pretend not to see our rich human differences. Acknowledging obvious differences is not the problem, but placing negative value judgments on those differences is! Stereotypes about those differences are always hurtful because they generalize, limit, and deny people's full humanity.

8. **Be aware of your own hesitancies to intervene in these kinds of situations.** Confront your own fears about interrupting discrimination, set your priorities, and take action. Develop response-abilIty!

9. **Project a feeling of understanding, love, and support when confronting individuals.** Without preaching, state how you feel and firmly address the hurtful behavior or attitude while supporting the dignity of the person. Be non-judgmental but know the bottom line. Issues of human dignity, justice, and safety are non-negotiable.

10. **Establish standards of responsibility and behavior and hold yourself and others accountable.** Demonstrate your personal and organizational commitment in practices, policies, and procedures, both formal and informal. Maintain high expectations for all people.

11. **Be a role model and be willing to take the risks that leadership demands.** Reflect and practice anti-bias, multicultural values in all aspects of your life. Demonstrate that you respect and value the knowledge, talents, and diversity of all people.

12. **Work collectively with others, organize, and support efforts that combat prejudice and oppression in all it's forms.** Social change is a long-term struggle and it's easy to get discouraged, but together we have the strength and vision to make a difference.

Written by Patti DeRosa, Cross-Cultural Consultation, 28 S. Main Street #177, Randolph, MA 02368; 1994.

Family Living and Social Services Careers

If you enjoy working with others and are interested in the social needs of people, you may wish to consider a career in one of the areas listed below. These careers address needs of individuals and families, groups, and communities. A person pursuing one of these careers will need a whole range of skills, from human relations skills to organizational expertise. Qualities of tact, assertiveness, compassion, sensitivity, and good judgment will be important.

Entry Level Jobs

Babysitter
Camp counselor
Child care aide
Nursing aide
Nursing home attendant
Recreation assistant

Jobs That Require Technical Training

Child care paraprofessional
Family consultant-speaker
Home health aide
Homeless shelter director
Homemaker's aide
Licensed practical nurse
Personnel worker
Police officer
Public health educator
Social service worker
Substance abuse counselor
Teacher's aide
Youth organization worker

Jobs That Require a Bachelor's Degree or More

Adoption attorney
Child psychologist
Counselor
Director, Battered Women Task Force
Displaced Homemaker Coordinator
Employment counselor
Extension Agent
Family and consumer science specialist
Family lawyer
Family therapist
Genetic counselor
Geriatric nurse or physician
Guidance counselor
Home-care hospice nurse
Human development educator
Marriage counselor
Minister
Occupational therapist
Pediatric nurse
Pediatrician
Physical therapist
Probation officer
Psychologist
Recreation director for retirement home
Refugee resettlement director
Religious educator
Social worker
Sociologist
Family life teacher
Youth director

Source: Audrey P. Riker and Holly E. Brisbane. *Married and Single Life Teacher Resource Book.* New York: Glencoe Division, Macmillin/McGraw-Hill, 1992.